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THE CHINESE PEOPLE :  
THEIR PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



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# THE CHINESE PEOPLE

THEIR PAST, PRESENT, AND  
FUTURE

*by*

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*with*

A FOREWORD

*by*

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## PREFACE

THE facts for the building of this work have been collecting for over twenty years, and have been utilized for numerous University Extension courses. What else may be in it is born of all experience, physical and mental.

My thanks are due to Professor J. Percy Bruce for reading my manuscript, for writing the Foreword, and for having helped to clarify my uncertain thoughts about the Future ; to all those whose mighty labours in the difficult field of research have made this synthesis and interpretation possible ; to Miss Beryl Carson for compiling the Index ; and finally to my wife for having undertaken the tiresome task of detecting lapses of style, and reading and correcting proofs.



## FOREWORD

THE problem of China's future is one in which all lovers of China are deeply interested, and any sincere, intelligent and sympathetic effort made for the solution of that problem will not fail of its welcome. Outside the circle of those, however, who have some sort of intimate connection with that country, it is to be feared the interest is but of a limited extent, unless it be in times of crisis such as we have had now and again in recent years. And yet, apart altogether from China's political upheavals, internecine struggles, or international complications, the problem is one which well deserves the serious study of all, and it is a question whether any of us can afford to be indifferent to it.

That the Chinese people number approximately one-fourth of the human race, that their country is correspondingly vast, and that its latent wealth passes imagination, are facts in themselves of momentous import.

Perhaps the two outstanding characteristics of the race are their culture and their economic genius. Their culture, as shown in their literature and art, will challenge comparison with that of any other ancient race, whilst evidence of their economic genius is to be found alike in their internal trade and in their international commerce, among the merchants of Shanghai and the shopkeepers of San Francisco.

China's future, therefore, is pregnant with immense possibilities. It is hardly too much to say that her emergence from the present transition period, when political order will make possible the development of her vast resources, will usher in a new era for the whole world. What aspect that new era will assume will depend largely on the nature of that emergence. But let us not forget that fundamentally the Chinese people are predisposed to friendship and friendliness, to co-operation rather than competition, and those who know them best are the most confident that whatever the outcome

from the present chaos may be their future is fraught with the greatest possibilities for good, not only for themselves, but for all other peoples.

Perhaps one of the greatest deterrents to the study of the Chinese problem is the difficulty of knowing where to begin, and, on the part of busy people, the fear of not being able to find sufficient time for its adequate study. All the more welcome is such a book as this. It is concise and yet comprehensive. The development of China as we know her to-day from the China of ancient history is traced with sympathetic understanding. No matter how busy one may be one will find here no more than can be compassed with comparative ease, and yet enough to give a clear and intelligent apprehension of all the essentials of the problem.

J. PERCY BRUCE.



## INTRODUCTORY

A GLANCE at the Map of Asia shows the enormous area, estimated at over four and a quarter million square miles, of what in these days is designated the Republic of China. Our story, however, has to do mainly, in both Past and Present, with China Proper, of the eighteen Provinces, having an area of some one and a half million square miles, bounded on the North by the Great Wall, on the West by the lofty mountain ranges running down from Tibet and swinging round to cut off Burma, and other former vassals in what is now Indo-China on the South. We may give it a "length," north and south, and a "breadth," east and west, each of some 1,300 miles.

It was within China Proper that the civilization of which we are to speak arose, and there, and there only, apart from comparatively small and often temporary infiltrations of settlers into the Outlying Lands, the movements of merchants, travellers and administrators, the occasional going-forth of warlike arrays, the influx into Manchuria and the emigration beyond the seas of latter days, the Chinese people lived and died. The Outlying Lands, the Mongolias, Inner and Outer, Turkestan and Tibet, Manchuria too, have played their part in Chinese History, but with an influence purely political, contributing nothing of importance to Chinese culture and civilization.

It is generally supposed that that civilization had its origins in the northern lands about the Yellow River, and the coastal plain now cut by the Grand Canal. The earliest records preserved in the so-called "Five Classics" give us a picture of comparatively small tribal communities, where the ruler, like a Scottish chief, was truly the patriarch and father of his people, having personal contact with them, whilst they in turn possessed a long-treasured right to remonstrate and present grievances. Then, as population grew, the original



community began to throw out offshoots, that in time crossed the dividing ranges into the valley of the Yangtze, driving out or absorbing the original stocks there, until at last the process ceased with the occupation of the mountainous Kwang Provinces in the south. There the Miaou and Hakka survive to this day, and the Chinese of the Kwang (usually spoken of as "Cantonese") display marked differences in appearance, character and language. They show generally more intellectual activity, and are less conservative than their cousins "north of the passes." They have been an adventurous folk, and have heard the call of the sea, that has drawn them in their great junks through the Malacca Straits to brave the perils of the Indian Ocean, and the deadly heats of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

But right down to the present day the Chinese village community exhibits characteristics drawn from its early tribal origin. It is an agricultural community, employing still the awkward but just strip system, and the immemorial methods of 4,000 years. Within the tribe the family is the intrinsic and enduring unit, bound together by its admirable cult of the ancestors, amongst whom the "mother" holds an honoured place. The village life centres round the ancestral hall, hallowed by the presence of the guardian gods, the tribal heroes, and the temple of the local nature-deities. The community maintains still common funds for pensions, scholarships, public works, police, and charity for those needing it. The songs and festivals of old days echo their music down the ages. The fundamental tribal principle maintains itself in the later guilds of artisans that developed with the growth of towns. They are organizations uniting both employers and employed somewhat like the proposed "corporative" organizations Europe is now groping after. The village headman, with his council of Elders, occupies something of the position of the patriarchal "Emperor" of primitive times. We may still contemplate the reflection of the ancient idyllic life, that Chinese Sages loved to picture as the Golden Age.

The conception was illusive enough. The perennial discords of mankind have never been hushed, not even in China. The "Book of History," indeed, soon begins their melancholy tale. They were expressions of the growth in

size and self-consciousness of the primitive tribal communities. The "Emperor's" functions became impossible as the population expanded beyond the capacities of patriarchal rule. The Sages, whilst condemning all, indeed, lay on him the greatest share of blame, and attribute his failure to the withdrawal of Heaven's Mandate. They expect a new time after the purging of the evil. It was to be the common cycle of Chinese History, of that of all mankind. But the early processes were truly long and wearisome. There were wars, rebellions, and general anarchy, until at last, in the Third Century B.C., the Chinese Charlemagne arose to establish a firm tradition of unity and imperial power.

But before this took place there were certain mighty cultural developments, and it is with these that we begin our story proper.





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# BOOK I

## THE GROWTH

CHAPTER I. THE GREAT TAO

CHAPTER II. THE MASTER

CHAPTER III. "THE FIRST EMPEROR"

CHAPTER IV. "THE GREATER VEHICLE"





## CHAPTER I

### THE GREAT TAO

It was in the anarchical period between the Seventh Century B.C., and the days of the "First Emperor," that the great philosophers arose, stimulated by the evils of the time to find a cure for them. As time went on they divided into two schools, one seeking the key in mystical speculation, the other concerning itself with the visible world and man as he really was. They both made their essential contributions, religious, ethical, social, and political, to Chinese culture, which, seeking the characteristic compromise, culled what it thought best from both, and moved onwards on its majestic course.

The mystical school bases itself on the old belief in the existence of the spirits and the spirit-powers, and the need for maintaining a harmony, inward and outward, in relation to all those powers and forces. That harmony was very evidently not being achieved since the breakdown of the old patriarchal organization. There was much evil in the land, in individuals and communities, war and rapine, bloodshed and tears, and the very forces of nature seemed to be taking part in the disorders, with their forthcoming plagues and droughts and floods and storms.

It is the common outcome of human speculation on these things to find two principles in the universe. In Chinese mystic philosophy these are accordingly the "yang"—male, creative, positive—symbolized by the chief of the numerous Dragons of Chinese mythology, whose mysterious airy shape can be detected brooding in the cloud-like shadows that lurk in the sacred jade; and the "yin"—female, receptive, negative—symbolized by the Tiger.

When there is discord of "yang" and "yin," evil comes, but when they are in harmony all will be well with the Five Elements of Nature: Earth, Metal, Wood, Water, and Fire; there will be no floods nor storms, nor earthquakes, and the



soil and the trees will bring forth their fruits in due season—as it was in the Golden Age ! All will be well, too, with men, who will dwell in peace with Nature, and move with becoming gravity and good-will amongst themselves.

And having got so far, (thought takes the great leap into the Unseen World, where the Spirits dwell, the World beyond the visible heavens, and sees a harmony there too, a harmony within itself, which having its counterpart and mirror in the visible world of men, would rule their orderly fates—if they would have it so ! )

Let us now picture some Chinese Sage of that tempestuous time, seeking the key to the lost harmony, and the opposing triumphant discords. Let us go with him, (away from the haunts of selfish ambitious men, to some quiet forest glade, with a stream of water running down it from the high hills rising towards the West. Above is the blue sky, with the changing clouds, and the great ball of the sun circling on his unending journey. The birds sing in the trees, the insects flutter by on a myriad wings, the fishes sport in the stream, and the wild deer browse quietly, taking no notice of the silent watcher brooding there. / Then, as the shadows begin to steal down from the higher ground, casting their mantles over the leafy trees, the song of the birds ceases, the bright insects no longer flaunt their colours in the sunlight, the deer shrink away seeking shelter, and the beasts of the night come out, whilst overhead the multiplying stars reveal the eternal majesty of the infinite.

And now, the Sage's mind, seeking to encompass these things in one all-embracing principle, finds it in the conception of the Great Tao—not God, no Person, but a mysterious, energising, motive power, itself invisible, intangible, effortless, but seeking ever to maintain a perfect *Harmony* of all the intricate elements of the vast whole. *There* lies the Secret. The sun never makes a mistake, the tree grows silently but surely to its appointed fruition, the rains fall, the mists rise, the moonbeams play gloriously upon the sparkling waters, the red sunset lights glow on the mountain peaks, and all wild creatures perform their tasks as the Tao guides them. These things supply the example that fretful, striving, ambitious man should follow. It is useless to strive, useless to fret, to be ambitious is a folly. The Sage will do none of these things. He will be passive like



the tree, and like it fulfil his true purpose without conscious effort, doing the task that is at hand and no more, seeking no reward, expecting none.

For the Great Man "is he who is in harmony: in his attributes, with heaven and earth; in his brightness, with the sun and moon; in his orderly procedure, with the four seasons; in his relation to what is fortunate and what is calamitous, with the spirit-like operations of providence" (Tao Teh Ching). He will refuse to fight against circumstances, for these belong but to the frothy scum of discord lying on the unconcerned surface of eternal things, and it is for the Sage to ignore them, and seek the deeper peace in the ultimate harmony of things visible and invisible, in communion with the Tao.

Lao Tsu, who is held by the Chinese to have been the first to give systematized expression to this philosophy, was born about 604 B.C. He was therefore an old man when Confucius, whom he is said to have met in 517 B.C., was young. He seeks to convey his meaning by paradoxical sayings. "It is the way of the Tao to act without thinking of acting, to conduct affairs without feeling the trouble of them, to taste without discerning any flavour, to consider the small as great, the few as many, and to recompense injury with kindness." Or again, "the Sage is free from display, therefore he shines, from self-assertion, therefore he is distinguished, from self-boasting, therefore his merit is acknowledged, from self-complacency, and therefore he acquires superiority." (And the Three Jewels of character are Gentleness, Economy and Humility, for "with that gentleness I can be bold, with that economy I can be liberal, shrinking from taking precedence of others I can become a vessel of the highest honour" (*Texts of Taoism*—Legge's translation).

The Good Man "will feel kindly towards all creatures. He will be loyal, filial, loving to his younger brothers, and submissive to his elder ones. He will make himself correct, and so transform others. He will compassionate widows and orphans. . . . He ought not to vaunt his superiorities . . . he must put a stop to evil and exalt what is good. . . . He should know how to receive insult without resenting it, and bestow favours without seeking a return . . ." War is a hateful folly, and the heroes of Taoism are not soldiers, but virtuous ministers, who have, too passively, perhaps, pre-



ferred suicide to the dishonour of continuing to exist in a world out of joint.

Such a character has its obvious defects.

It is sometimes said that Taoism teaches men to seek the "easiest way," to avoid difficulties, instead of trying to overcome them. It is by no means the whole tale. The "Way" is the Way of Harmony, an endeavour to fit oneself harmoniously to one's surroundings, which is not necessarily the "easiest way" in all cases. But, undoubtedly, the philosophy does militate against the making of high effort to rise above circumstance.

The Sage will indeed be humble and gentle, dignified and composed in bearing, patient in misfortune, eschewing pride, self-seeking, pomp and power, and these qualities, with a leaven of practical Confucianism, go to make the very perfect Chinese gentleman. But marring all, in greater or less degree according to the individual's temperament, are the curse of indifference, passivity, quietism, the inability to stand squarely against surrounding ills and master them.

On the political side Taoism propounded the unifying theories called for by the conditions of the times. Accepting the tradition of the Golden Age, when the tribe lived (as doubtless it did) as one family, with the "Emperor" as its "father," it sought to restore such a condition to the wider anarchical society of its day.

The Tao, it taught, had provided a Supreme Ruler for the Unseen World. Since, for the achievement of perfect harmony, there should be a parallel condition in the visible world, a supreme earthly ruler is necessary, holding sway by the same Divine Right that gave authority to the Lord of Heaven, whose son, indeed, he is. The other tribal leaders, the "Dukes," must go, surrendering their usurped authority, and all must accept the universal law to be applied by the autocratic ruler. Such a law, once duly recognized, would work automatically and harmoniously. There would be no need for punishment, for none would break it. The people, maintained in a safe ignorance about everything that did not immediately concern them, would return to the old primitive peasant simplicity in obedience to those set in authority over them. It is a picture to delight the hard-shell Conservative.

So far as we have considered it, the appeal of Taoism,



mystical, philosophical, political, has been to the educated classes. But it sought also to give the discordant beliefs and superstitions of the masses some elements of cohesion that would help to further the ultimate ideal of unity and harmony, with each and all finding appropriate place and function in the general scheme. Vulgar beliefs about the Unseen World were highly localised and independent. But by the system of the Tao, all tended towards the One, that was the Tao. Gods, godlings, spirits, might be as numerous as men themselves, but like men, they all derived from the Tao. What distinguished the former, the gods, the nature-spirits, the deified heroes, was that they were nearer to the Secret, in closer touch with the ultimate workings of the Great Tao, and so better able to perceive the actions necessary to ensure the sought-for harmony. Hence, if one could propitiate them, could win their favour, whether by gift, by magic, by rite, or by word, one could get their help and advice in that tricky matter of fitting oneself harmoniously to one's circumstances; one could get them to ward off one's diseases, and those of the crops; could learn the propitious hour for sowing, marriage, funerals, journeys, and other transactions of mundane life; could take out as it were an insurance policy against all the ills that flesh and fortune are heir to.

The temple, of course, was, like that of the Greeks, the house for the god. Its architecture, again like that of the Greeks, was "wooden," but, unlike the latter, it did not develop into a severe symmetry of columnal posts and square beams arranged in regular orders. The Chinese mind, which symbolized the creative forces of nature, not as mathematical laws, but under the grotesque form of the Dragon, was more impressed by the irregularity of nature. Curving eaves, fantastic carvings, twisted lines, unexpected bends and corners, express, perhaps, more truly, the uncertain and involved purposes of the Great Tao. In any case straight passages and corridors were abhorred as likely to afford too easy access to wandering—and consequently evil—spirits.

Decoration came to take the form of coloured tiles, arranged in fanciful patterns, but with certain rules as to the correctness and harmony of the colours. The courtyard would display panels showing the Dragon and the Tiger, the "yang" and the "yin," and there would be frescoes exhibiting the penalties



of the damned, or the more lawful activities of men upon earth, sowing, reaping, spinning, and so forth, through which harmony might be obtained, the Balanced Heart achieved, and those penalties avoided.

The image of the god eventually came to repose behind a regular altar, with candlesticks, and incense-burners, either simple brass bowls filled with soil, or fantastically shaped vessels to represent the mythological beasts, the "ky-lin." Beautifully written texts provided delight to the eye and edification for the mind. Coloured silk, cotton and paper hangings and banners, lanterns, umbrellas, and paraphernalia for use in processions and festivals make the interiors gay, if somewhat tawdry. The buildings varied in size, from elaborate structures connected with the later Imperial cult, to tiny wayside shrines whence the god looks out solemnly on the passer-by.

To the temple came the inquirer about those mundane matters of immediate concern. It must be remembered that the "god" is hardly a God in our sense. There is nothing really sacred about him. He is a being fundamentally of the same nature as man, or even beast, though having peculiar powers, and, it is to be feared, sometimes, evil or waspish inclinations. There are fees to be paid, rites and propitiations, and usually some kind of lot-drawing device, some casting of a fateful number or sign, which gives a reference to a magic book, where the sought-for answer can be found.

And the Sage, if he felt contempt for these things, could yet look on benignly, for were they not the efforts of the people to keep themselves in harmony and unity with the Tao? And the general effort would be good for all!

The true Taoist philosopher seeks for no reward other than the consciousness of that blest harmony. But since the achievement of it tends to make life easier, less harassing, more placid, that very placidity and its consequence of a long quiet life, tend, in the frailty of human nature, to become the reward in themselves. For there are not many who can be content with just virtue as its own reward. So long life on earth became the congenial prospect for those whose virtue, or, what was really the same thing, skill in achieving a proper harmony with one's circumstances, led them towards the Secret. Such an one must, in Chinese eyes, have been Li Ching-yun of Szechwan, whose death at the age of 256 years



was reported in the London *Times*, of the 8th May, 1933! And Long Life even became personified as a God to whom prayers might be made, whilst his name embodies the familiar wish welcome to the ears of all but the most unhappy.

But for the veritable saints, held up as examples for reverence and emulation, there was a yet greater reward, bringing them to the fellowship of the Immortals, of Earth, as the reward of 300 good deeds, whilst for 1,300 one went to Heaven itself, to the Unseen World, where, in his Palace of Jade, dwelt the Jade Emperor.

On the other hand, contemplating the varied careers of men, it was logical to propose that if long life was a reward of virtue, punishment would take the form of a loss of happy years. The Book of Actions and Retributions contains an enormously long and strangely incongruous schedule of offences and corresponding punishments. Thus: "... if he strides over the hearth; kills newly-born children; if he sings and dances on the last day of the moon... spits when fronting the north, sighs when fronting the fireplace, points at a rainbow, or kills a tortoise without reason..." he must for these and similar offences suffer shortenings of life ranging from 100 days to 12 years. Other misfortunes may also be attributed to such lapses from proper conduct. And the system even provides opportunities for altruism and bargaining, for a typical prayer runs: "I pray you bestow a good rain, for which I am willing to have three years deducted from my allotted time on earth."

Then, later on, partly through Buddhist influence, partly perhaps because the "schedule" was not proving an effective deterrent, whilst human life was doubtless in some cases too short to provide scope for adequate punishment of the habitual sinner, came the effective device of a Hell, where punishment could be prolonged indefinitely. It was a place unpleasant enough, if we are to accept as authentic warnings the descriptions, and the pictures on the temple walls.

On the other hand men will still cherish the inveterate conviction that they can escape the consequences of their ill-doing. Beginning with a belief in the power of the propitiated spirits for this purpose there develops a faith in magic applied through human means, which gets confirmation as primitive science really does begin to discover medicinal cures for human ailments, and means of subduing the forces of nature. From



this to the belief in the Elixir of Life, giving eventual access to the Abode of the Immortals, the step was an easy one, congenial to Taoist hopes and teachings. Nor was the time spent on this vain quest entirely wasted. It was something that there should be research at all, and in China the seekers were held in some honour as well as fear, and were not subject to the dangers and persecutions of their brethren further West.

Yet the scientific harvest was small. The knowledge of the lodestone probably came from the Arabs, and its virtues were only esteemed for its supposed uses in divination. Explosive mixtures were probably a discovery of the magicians. Their properties for war were, happily, not appreciated, and until Western civilization taught that barbarous use, they were employed more legitimately to frighten away evil spirits, and add to the joyful though disturbing clatter of the festivals. There was great development in the ceramic art, but we cannot point to such real scientific advance as the Arabs and Jews of the Middle Ages, and after them Western Europe, achieved.

With the advent of Buddhism, Taoism, faced with a rival, began to organize its temple priests into a regular caste. In the First Century A.D., a certain Chang Tao-ling achieved "the Great Secret," and was released at 123 years of age to Immortality. He became the Taoist "Pope," and the succession has been perpetuated by transmigration (a Buddhist conception) in his family. This Pope or Patriarch, the Divine Teacher, lived at Lung-hu Mountain, about 60 miles east of Nanchang in Kiang-si Province. In 1116 a member of the family, a certain Yu, was deified as the God of Hell. To him descend yearly the spirits of the hearth to report on the deeds of the household and receive his approval or condemnation. He also causes *his* reports on what is going on in Hell to be posted in the temples for the warning and edification of those still in the flesh! But probably few took these things seriously even in more unsophisticated days.

An understanding of Taoism gives the key to many traits of Chinese character.

It explains the inveterate desire to adapt oneself to circumstances, for compromise and management, degenerating into "squaring," "squeeze," and "working the oracle," as opposed to decisive forthright action, that gives offence or causes friction, however deservedly. It shows us the Chinese

ideal of placidity and composure, comfort and enjoyment, in harmony with one's surroundings, bringing a long quiet life concluding in serenity and honour.

On a higher plane it gives us the key to Chinese art.

We should now contemplate with wider understanding the great Chinese paintings, sculpture and poetry, with their sense of the underlying mystery of the universe ; of the intrinsic unity of all things, in heaven above and on the earth beneath ; of the music in the cry of the flying bird, the sighing of the wind in the pine-trees, and the rumble of the thunder behind the mountains ; whilst above, below, around, nay, immanent in all things, hangs the brooding spirit of the Dragon, proclaiming the ultimate harmony of the Seen and the Unseen.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MASTER

KUNG FU-TSU, the Master Kung, whom we call Confucius, was born in Shangtung about 551 B.C., and died about 479 B.C. The political conditions of his time were still anarchical, though the tribal communities had certainly begun to coalesce under their Dukes or Kings into something like organized states, with populations of perhaps one to two millions. But the bond of cohesion was loose. Rulers were of the nature of brigands or adventurers, who held power till overthrown by a stronger rival, or by the splitting asunder of the unit, in revolt against corrupt or tyrannous rule.

The practical mind of Confucius eschewed the soaring ideals of the Taoists for complete unity through the Divine Right of a single ruler. He proposed, more modestly, to induce one at least of the warring, corrupt and disordered States to revive the simplicity, justice, and fellow-feeling of the primitive tribal community of the Golden Age. Clearly it was not now practicable to go back to the simple family organization of the tribe, but Confucius decided, nevertheless, that it must form the basis of the wider communion he envisaged, that he would, in effect, build up the ideal unity of the Taoists from below, and not seek to impose it from above!

Confucius was thus a true individualist, and he saw clearly that neither family nor State can be securely founded save on the firm characters of the individuals composing them. "From the Ruler down to the common people, this is a root matter for everyone—to cultivate personal character . . ."

Nevertheless, in practice, individualism must be checked and restrained. And for that there is the old natural bond, the bond of Filial Piety, the fundamental social and political virtue. It is the continual theme of the Teacher and his disciples, involving strict discipline within the family, reverence of child for parent, imperative regard for duties towards ancestors. As times goes on its virtues acquire yet wider attributes, reaching out to a compromise with the Taoist conception of unity from



above in harmony with the overruling spiritual influences. "Perfect filial piety and fraternal duty reach to and move the spiritual intelligences, and diffuse their light on all within the four seas."

But Confucius himself kept nearer to earth.

Personal virtue is what really matters, but the Master does not suggest that all are equal, in virtue, knowledge, capacity, or anything else. On the contrary there must always be Leaders. The true Democracy is, after all, one that can produce and recognize them.

The Leader may be recognized according to his perfection in the Five Virtues that go to make the Superior Man.

First comes "neighbourliness," appropriately expressed by a picture-sign indicating "two-men." It lacks, unfortunately, something of the active virtue of "love," having rather the implication of the minor virtue of "reciprocity"—"What you do not yourself desire, do not impose on others." The second conveys the idea of righteousness and justice, respect for property, duty, contract. Propriety follows. It covers ceremonial, self-discipline, decency of speech and manners, a demeanour expressing self-respect and inspiring due reverence from others. The Master lays great stress on it as necessary for stability of character.

Knowledge comes fourth, knowledge of history, poetry, political theory. It must be active knowledge, thinking about, commenting on, and, above all, applying its teachings to practical affairs. And it should not be merely selfish. "Self-culture is for the sake of all."

Finally, giving cohesion and reality to the first four, and without which indeed they are but windy emblems of what ought to be, there must be Sincerity, the cardinal virtue, implying faithfulness on the one side, and confidence on the other, the whole idea being beautifully rendered by an expressive picture-sign symbolizing "the Man by his Word!"

The Five Virtues, then, form the whole armour of the Superior Man, who having put it on becomes the ideal type of Leader. "He speaks, having thought whether the words should be spoken. . . . His virtue and righteousness are such as will be honoured. . . . His deportment is worthy of contemplation. . . . The people revere and love him, imitate and become like him. . . . He is easy to serve, but difficult to



please. Try to please him by the adoption of wrong principles and you will fail. . . ."

These are not bad rules for enabling people to recognize the real Leaders, and eschew the false ones. There is the danger of arrogance, from which the Scholar Class has not been free, but on the whole we may say that they were able to convince the Chinese people throughout the ages that they *were* superior, and their example worthy to be aspired to.

In the enlarged society which Confucius was called upon to envisage, it was necessary to develop the doctrine of the "family" bond as a check upon extreme individualism still further, to make it the unifying principle of the evolving State. Besides the family relations of husband and wife, father and son, elder brother and younger; those of ruler and subject, those between friends, are also divine. In the last case there must be mutuality; in the first four, rule on the one side, in righteousness and benevolence; submission on the other, in righteousness and sincerity.

The State in fact becomes a Family, rather an artificial one, doubtless, but still one in which the Head resumes the patriarchal position of the ancient tribal ruler, and as "Father" is entitled to the dues required from "filial piety." Personal virtue is, of course, required of him, but he is not the pure autocrat of the Taoists. He is to be assisted and advised by the Superior Men. Moreover he has his responsibilities to the people, and, just as a son may seek to reform a parent by remonstrance and example, so may an ill-governed people reproach a neglectful ruler. It was a pregnant reaffirmation of the old patriarchal principle.

The opposition to philosophic Taoism, is, in fact, considerable, though not, as will appear, beyond all compromise and reconciliation. Confucius eschewed speculation into the Unseen, and has little to say of God or gods, future life, retribution, judgment, or the unknown purpose of things. It was enough for him—too much indeed—to try to understand life and men, and the things of the visible world. As he once said, "How can one know about death, when one does not understand life?" The scepticism is characteristic of Chinese thought. Such matters are for the vulgar, who may, if they will, believe in their tutelary gods and spirits and seek to win their favour, by offering and petition. But the true



philosopher will be contemptuous of such self-seeking activities. Once when the Master was seriously ill, Tsu Lu requested to be allowed to say prayers for him. "My life is my prayer," was the somewhat arrogant, yet noble answer. The Sage does not believe that it is the gods who bring wealth and well-being to the people. That is the business of the sincere ruler, informed by the wise men of his State. The higher conception of prayer, as an uplifting of the spirit to communion with the Deity, of which the Taoist, in elevated mood, could catch a glimmering, is absent.

Confucian political theory did not succeed in subduing the over-emphasis laid on the family bond, but it did in time, after some compromise with Taoism, provide the enduring foundations for an Imperial scheme. But that time was not yet. The Master, after an apprenticeship of practical administrative work in his own country, wandered amongst the warring disordered States, gathering a few disciples, and trying to get, generally in vain, the ear of those in high places. Meeting with little but sorrow and disappointment he was sustained only by the love and devotion of his followers, who treasured his sayings, and with whose help he was able to collect and preserve the immortal legacy of the Classics.

How his doctrine came to be accepted and established will presently be told. Meanwhile let us, in spirit, approach the shrine-tablet of the most accomplished, holy, first and most eminent Teacher of Ten Thousand Generations, and repeat the words of the Emperors of those later days: "Great art thou, O Perfect Sage! Thy virtue is full, thy doctrine complete. Among mortal men there has not been thy equal. . . . Thy statutes and laws have come gloriously down. . . ."



## CHAPTER III

### "THE FIRST EMPEROR"

CONFUCIUS passed away with the sense of failure and disappointment that seems to be the inevitable lot of those who do good in the world, and the tribal wars continued to run their long and ugly course. Yet the period following the death of the Sage is not unfruitful, for if the spectacle of man's dissensions and follies drives some to despair and quietism, with others it stimulates thought and action to the finding of remedies.

The Schools sprang up, moulding their doctrines around the same intrinsic problems that were troubling contemporary Greece.

The Taoists continued to develop the theory of Divine Right. Its more practical exponents became the protagonists of the Legalist School that was to stand for a time in triumphant opposition to the Confucians. Others emphasized their desire to see restored the primitive simplicity that had passed away, and condemned all learning, law, education, and class distinctions. More aggressive still were those who bluntly taught that each must stand for himself, and that there was no distinction between virtue and vice; whilst at the opposite extreme were the Mohists, or followers of Meh Ti, with a doctrine of universal love. And all the time, not exactly in irreconcilable opposition to these teachings, but seeking characteristically to find the just balance and compromise best suited to the actual facts of human nature, the Confucians steadily pressed on, and produced in due course the great Mencius (Meng Tsu), the Second Master, born about 100 years after the death of the First.

The boy showed an early precocity, and an attachment for the discourses of the neighbouring groups or "study circles." Like his great predecessor he spent most of his life seeking the man who would adopt his theories for the establishment of the ideal State. We may believe that he lived up to his own ideal of the Great Man: "To dwell in love, the wide house



of the world ; to stand in propriety, the correct seat of the world ; to walk in righteousness, the great path of the world . . . to be above riches and honour, above poverty and mean condition, unshaken by power and force. . . ."

Like the Taoists and Legalists he was, of course, anxious to see the end of the devastating wars, which were giving continued force to Taoist views on unity by the Divine Right of a single ruler. The fruitful work of Mencius, who doubtless foresaw the coming victory of the Taoists, was to provide Chinese political theory with a definite check upon the autocratic principle, by adding to the people's intrinsic right of remonstrance, the last resort of resistance.

The institution of Government, he declares with the Taoists, is from Heaven, but the Ruler is of the people, and his right to rule is only recognized by his capacity to do his duty to them. For " the People come first, the spirits of land and grain second, the sovereign last." So long as the Ruler is competent, so long as he exhibits the true attribute of government—righteousness, benevolence, desire for the welfare and education of the people, development of the land, a sufficient livelihood for all—he holds the Mandate of Heaven, and must be revered and obeyed as its Son. But when these things are not achieved, it is a sign that the Mandate of Heaven is exhausted, and allegiance may lapse. A bad ruler may be dethroned, by his relations, or by his ministers, the Superior Men, or by one specially raised up by Heaven.

We can readily understand the fierce opposition of the Taoists to a theory likely in their eyes only to perpetuate the wars and anarchy. And indeed, the democratic Mencian principle is not easy to apply. The intrinsic difficulty all through Chinese history has been to find a practical means of giving effect to it. The doctrine did temper the autocracy of the Son of Heaven, but as the Empire grew in size, and direct contact between the Emperor and his people ceased, the only outlet for the people's grievances came to be through the official, scholar class. They were not without their heroes on occasion, but were often corrupt, nearly always conservative, and unwilling to be thought obstreperous by those above them in the hierarchy. Consequently when grievances became acute, instead of reaching the ears of the rulers in



warning, they served only to nourish the growth of secret disruptive societies, until in the final event the cup overflowed, and the dynasty disappeared in a welter of revolution and civil war leading (till 1912) to the establishment of a new dynasty. The Republic of our day still awaits final judgment.

Mencius died in 289 B.C., having like his forerunner, no visible achievement to contemplate. Anarchy still reigned, and pointed steadily to the solution of the Taoists. Their views triumphed. The House of Ch'in was proving its claims to Divine Right in impressive practical fashion by victories over other States and claimants. After some vicissitudes its head, Shih Hwang Ti, finally subdued the rival States, established an Imperial Capital at Sianfu (in Shensi), and in the year 221 B.C. proclaimed himself, with the full support of the Taoists and Legalists, First Emperor. He may have held undisputed sway as far as the Yangtze Valley, over an adult population of more than 10 millions.

His reign was short, but fruitful. Resistance still continued in the South, as it was long to do, but the lands beyond the borders of China Proper, in Tonking and Cochin China, began to learn the implications of the Divine authority of the Son of Heaven. On the North the barbarian Tatars, a spawn of the underworld, were restrained by the vast conception of the Great Wall, that reinforces the mountain barriers, and holds the valley passes with its gates and towers. Climbing sometimes over heights of 4,000 feet, it ran with its windings for some 1,300 miles, and was extended by another 300 or so in the days of the Ming. Near Peking there is an inner and outer wall, and a north and south branch forming the western frontier of Chihli. Another branch protects the Tibetan frontier. The height is 20 to 30 feet, with 40 foot towers at 200 yards intervals. One million men are said to have been employed for 10 years in the building of it, but estimates are vague, and very little reliance can be placed on any figures of the early Chinese historians. The Wall proved an effective barrier for many centuries, and it still marks the true northern frontier of China Proper.

The Confucians seem at first to have lost their heads in the triumph of the rival school. Doubtless many of them had personal attachments to the courts of the fallen States. But it was no time to press tribal or democratic claims. Internal



anarchy was being subdued by the divine powers of a veritable Son of Heaven. Some tactless action on the part of Confucian scholars enabled their rivals to accuse them of seeking to restore the old tribal anarchy. The great Emperor's wrath was roused. He ordered the destruction of the Books that dealt with the histories and culture of the tribal states, so that their disruptive traditions might sink into oblivion. It is not at all certain that the destruction of the Classics was intended. It was not achieved, though the legendary heroic efforts of the Scholars to save them may have a basis of truth. Confucianism anyhow, by adapting itself to the new conditions, survived to modify the extreme autocratic claims of the Taoists, and to provide the real basis for the future Empire.

But the Taoist doctrine of Divine Right received expression in the Cult of Heaven, which now became established as an Imperial attribute, probably reviving functions of the patriarchal “ Emperors ” of earlier days. The rite was an ancestral one, the Emperor, and the Emperor alone, as Son of Heaven—it would never, of course, be proper for any subject to do it—interceding with his Divine Father, Shang Ti, Lord of Heaven, for his people. He invokes Heaven's blessing on them, prays for rain and a rich harvest, and at the winter solstice assumes the burden of the people's guilt, and gives an account of the year. The carrying out of the rite is the confirmation of Heaven's mandate to its earthly bearer.

The great “ First Emperor ” failed to establish an enduring dynasty. His son's brief reign faded out in a welter of revolt and confusion. But Shih Hwang Ti had set up a tradition, and provided an example. A wholesome dread of tribal anarchy had instilled itself in the minds of the scholars and people, and the theory of Divine Right now gave China her first enduring line of Emperors, the Han.

The Han Dynasty, with some vicissitudes, lasted for over 400 years (from 206 B.C. to A.D. 220) and in this period the characteristic Chinese civilization may be said to have become established, so that to this day the Chinese will call themselves the Sons of Han.

Confucian theories had received a temporary set-back, but reaction soon came, and scholars and people returned for spiritual satisfaction to the system that insisted on the impor-



tance of the individual, and required his education in classical lore. In 124 B.C. the triumph of the Classics, the legacy of Confucius and Mencius, as the medium of education, was marked by the founding of the Imperial Academy at the Capital (later the Han-lin) for their study, whilst the timely invention of paper, about A.D. 105, helped to spread knowledge and wisdom.

Thus, in the great Han period, the people got to some extent the benefit of both theories. The authority of the Son of Heaven gave comparative peace. Confucian education, spreading with the aid of the new schools and colleges, preserved self-respect, and a sense of his rights to the citizen. Quite early, indeed, a certain amount of decentralization, inevitable in such a large country, began, and the new units that sprang up, to the number of over 100, though strictly controlled, anyhow at first, by the provincial and central powers, did provide scope for the effective assertion of public opinion as a check upon any tyrannous tendencies.

Some of the consequences feared by the Taoists did, unhappily, follow. We hear of many risings and rebellions. But on the whole it was a great and glorious time. The wide-flung claims of the Son of Heaven inspired him with Imperial visions of the ultimate subjugation of all the outlying barbarian races to an harmonious concord like to that maintained by the Heavenly Ruler in the Spirit-World. The remaining regions of South China itself were at last subdued, anyhow in name. The Tatars and Huns in Manchuria and Mongolia beyond the Great Wall learnt to fear the might of the organized Chinese power. The allurements of commerce came to reinforce the more mystic aspirations of a would-be world-ruler, and the subjugation for a brief space of the far regions of Turkestan cleared the way for the establishment of the silk trade, by the long perilous route through the Central Asian spaces to Imperial Rome, and perhaps to the Arab lands of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea.

Meanwhile art and literature flourished, though they can scarcely be said to have reached the heights of contemporary Greece and Rome. Their inspiration surely came from Taoism, if forms owed something to the Classics. They breathe the sense of union with nature; of the ceaseless strivings of the Unseen Powers, reflected in the visible world,



for that elusive harmony of their conflicting influences ; of the helplessness of man to do aught else than seek to adjust himself to circumstance, whose riddle he must try to read in communion with the transcendental elements. It is a heartrending, never-ceasing struggle, and the Secret is hard to win.

“ Our years on earth are brief,  
But few a hundred win ;  
A thousand years of grief are packed therein.”  
Han Poet.—Trans. Charles Budd.

And so we may well despair of it all :

“ Let us drain the goblet while we live,  
And take the best the fleeting hour can give.”  
(Trans. Budd.)

Whilst love but makes one more sensitive to fortune's blows :

“ The red hibiscus and the reed,  
The fragrant flowers of marsh and mead,  
All these I gather as I stray,  
As though for one now far away.  
I strive to pierce with straining eyes  
The distance that between us lies.  
Alas, that hearts which beat as one  
Should thus be parted and undone ! ”  
Mei Sheng (d. 140 B.C.) Trans. by H. A. Giles  
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Is it only in imagination that we catch some glimpse of the spiritual despair that seems to be closing on the more highly-strung minds in spite of the outward pomp and display of the Great Dynasty ? Or was there really a sense of the emptiness and vanity of things, a groping out into the Unknown, for some satisfying answer to those eternal problems on which the First Master was silent ? One must suppose so. It is difficult otherwise to account for the reception of a doctrine so alien to traditional Chinese thought as Buddhism, modified though it became to suit the Chinese outlook. The new teaching so far established itself as to receive recognition from the Han Emperor Ming Ti in A.D. 65, and henceforth became an enduring, though disturbing influence in Chinese life.

## CHAPTER IV

### "THE GREATER VEHICLE"

THE reception of the alien doctrine of Buddhism, even in its modified form, is perhaps the strongest confutation of the common opinion of the inveterate nature of Chinese conservatism. But, looking into the origins of that remarkable creed, we may note certain resemblances to the conclusions of Chinese mysticism, that help to explain what happened, and remind us of the intrinsic unity of human nature.

Taoism had its sense of the oneness of all phenomena under the pervading influence of the indwelling Tao. It knew a great hierarchy of gods and spirits and ancestral heroes, with their supreme Heavenly Ruler. Brahmanism, from which Buddhism sprang, contemplates a similar unity, where all existences are but temporary phases of the World-Soul in which they will be ultimately re-absorbed. It presents, like Taoism, a great pantheon of gods and spirits, phases too of the Eternal One. The individual soul proceeds on a continually recurring cycle of existences, from birth through life to death, and then to birth again, until, as a reward for virtue and a strict adherence to rite and rule, the victory of re-union with the One is achieved. Meanwhile the status of each individual in the succeeding phases of the Wheel of Life is determined by the acts, the Karma, of the previous existences.

It may be noted that, strictly, there can be no real family tradition here, for an individual who might have been a monkey or a king or a god in his latest life, could obviously have no sense of unity with some peasant family, say, into which he was now born again. The parent, in fact, is merely the material instrument for starting the soul on a fresh round of the Wheel, and this implication has always been the great stumbling-block against the full acceptance of the teaching by the Chinese.

Buddhism was an attempted reformation of Brahmanism.



It was a social revolt, a protest against the rigidity of the caste system, justified, in Brahman eyes, by the doctrine of Karma. But above all, it was a revolt of the spirit ; a revolt against the tendency, known to all human creeds, to place the letter above the spirit, the rite and rule before the rectification of the heart ; against seeking a reward for virtue, instead of following it for its own sake. For, says the Teacher, “ My Way is of grace . . . able to bring a man to heaven, and share in all its pleasures. Yet to *seek* for these is a great evil.” All acts of merit should be done “ of charity, with the single heart.”

Instead of rite and rule and ascetic practice, transcending even the virtuous action that Brahmanism of course required, stands Love, without which all those other things are but as “ sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.” Through it victory can be achieved by all, by king or beggar, whatever the burden of previous sins. Such is the uplifting message, but in practice Love itself, the true purifying love, becomes difficult of achievement in a world as it is, rank with human desires, ambitions and passions. Thus the Buddhist doctrine of love came to require a renunciation of earthly interests, not far removed, sometimes, from the Brahman asceticism it had condemned. So again, whilst the Buddha deprecates all speculation about the ultimate future of the Soul, and Paradise, as tending to set up a reward for virtue, and proposes nothing but the “ silence ” of Nirvana, the Brahman pantheon is not rejected. Its gods and spirits remain phases in the existence of the soul, and dwell, temporarily, in ephemeral heavens (or hells).

This recognition of ephemeral spirit-worlds has been both the strength and weakness of Buddhism. It has made its path easier in other lands, Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, China or Japan, since a place can readily be found for local and traditional gods. But the acceptance of them has stimulated the old corruptions of rite and ritual and prayer for the securing of direct reward, rather than for the uplifting of the spirit to the true conception of love.

The process began early. The Buddha had preached the possibility of salvation for all. But the Brahman was soon able to justify his exclusive attitude by pointing out that, in practice, the low-caste and sinner were not really capable of



achieving the Heavenly Virtue, of following the rules of the Noble Path. Hence arose the doctrine of a "grace" to be won by communion with the Buddha himself, or his saints, through the medium of their earthly relics. Soon began to grow up innumerable shrines, the "stupas" or "pagodas," originally great solid structures, symbolising the Universe of Illusion, built to preserve the sacred relic. The worshipper, in strict Buddhism, goes not indeed to pray for benefits, but to receive the grace to keep him to the Noble Path. It was not long however before the inveterate practices of appeal to the gods and spirits resumed their place in the Buddhist scheme, and worship tended to become again a mere selfish seeking of salvation.

This was the situation shortly before the beginning of our era. Buddhist thinkers were, of course, seeking a way out of the difficulty.

The solution was found in the setting up of a new ideal, that of the Bodhisat, who had indeed won through the Path, and earned salvation, but had made a grand and supreme sacrifice by renouncing it for a space in order to be reborn as a human being, a Buddha, who would restore the Law, and the doctrine of Love, for the regeneration of the fallen. It is a noble ideal that, emphasizing the spirit of sacrifice, seeks to preserve the doctrine of salvation for all through the grace of the Bodhisat. The reformed cult therefore claims the title of the Greater Vehicle. One must approve communion with such a thought, but an inevitable outcome was the setting up of the Future Buddha, or Maitreya, as a god whose favour and aid might be won.

In China, as the tribal gods, nature-spirits, and ancestral heroes found their places in the scheme, the popular Taoist God of Wealth and Happiness, the jolly-looking, fat, pot-bellied Ho Shang, sometimes called the Laughing Buddha, known to us, as to the Chinese, as a "mascot," was identified with Maitreya. He seems to symbolise the cheerful Chinese outlook in refutation of the pessimistic implications of rigid Buddhism.

A further development, to satisfy popular needs, gave content to that noble nothingness of Nirvana, about which the Buddha, in his anxiety to prevent the corruption of virtue by proposing a reward for it, had been silent. The inveterate



desire for a Paradise, with some precision as to its nature, was satisfied by the presentation of a veritable Land of Bliss, the dwelling-place of those who had achieved salvation. These were set up superior to the gods themselves, as Beings of unique celestial worth.

But such celestial Buddhas were too far away. They might be reached by prayer, and are in fact prayed to, but there was need for a more comforting, intimate Presence. Thus was introduced the doctrine of emanation, in which the Celestial Buddha manifests himself as the Divine Son, as the Spirit of Mercy, of Wisdom, and even, in the form of the Thunder-God, as the Spirit of Destruction. These Beings were usually identified with traditional gods. In China the Divine Son is represented by the familiar many-armed and many-headed god, Kwan Yin. He has many eyes to see, many ears to hear, and many hands to help with. The great Chinese travellers, Fa Hsien and Hiuen Tsiang, who went to India to seek out Buddhist scriptures in the Fourth and Seventh Centuries A.D. respectively, both pray to him, and he appears to the former in the aspect of a Guardian. He is held to be incarnate in the Dalai Lama of Tibet. The female personification of Kwan Yin as the Goddess of Mercy is a beautiful and favourite subject of Chinese and Japanese Buddhist art. She was incarnate once—so runs the tale—in an Indian Princess who descended into Hell to comfort sinners. The myth, with its reflection of the Christian story, touches a common chord of human nature.

Buddhism, conceding much to the Chinese outlook, eventually established itself firmly in China. The visible evidence of its victory, and the changes wrought in it, is the development of the stern, massive, featureless “stupa” of primitive Buddhism into the graceful Chinese pagoda. In this familiar feature of the Chinese landscape the superimposed galleries represent the transient paradises, the homes of the gods and spirits, within the Wheel of ephemeral existence. Above and beyond, the pointed pinnacle aspires towards the celestial eternity where dwell the supernal Lords of Light.

The new factor was at first, like Christianity in contemporary Rome, disturbing and disintegrating. There was much opposition from both Taoists and Confucians, and



long centuries passed before the eventual compromise was reached.

The Taoist Sages were impelled to combat the new doctrine, which had so much in common with their own, by adapting their own popular cult to the attractive rites of Buddhism. The Buddhists in their turn adopted the popular gods into their pantheon. The two cults, indeed, tended to supplement one another, and the Chinese themselves, whether professing Buddhists, as most of them became, or not, saw no incongruity in calling for the aid of Taoist deities in appropriate circumstances.

More serious opposition came from the Confucians who, eager for the ordered State providing the conditions for the material well-being of the people, insistent on the family bond as the unifying principle of that State, concerned for the development of individual character, condemned especially the pessimistic fatalism, and the ascetic and monastic aspects of Buddhism.

The Buddhist monks, charming and delightful gentlemen as they may be, have indeed like their prototypes further west, continually provided targets for wit and satirist. Writing in the Eighteenth Century, long after Buddhism was thought to have fitted itself into the Chinese scheme, Lan Ting-yuan complains of the state of the monasteries, and attacks the whole monastic system. "The nuns," he says, "are not given in marriage—the desire for which is implanted in every human breast, even in prophets and sages. Thus to condemn thousands of human beings to the dull monotony of the cloister, granting that they strictly keep their vows, is more than sufficient to interfere seriously with the equilibrium of the universe. Hence floods, famines, and the like—to say nothing of the misdeeds of the nuns in question."

Buddhism, moreover, had brought upon the Chinese scene the problem that still troubles the Western world, that of the relations between Church and State, between temporal and spiritual. Neither Confucians nor Taoists could recognise any separation between the two. The Emperor alone could be the intermediary with Heaven, whose son he was. The Confucians might indeed regard with half-contemptuous toleration the efforts of the new doctrine to explore the Unseen World, but only on condition that "religion was



kept out of politics.” But the question as to the range of the respective spheres has not yet been finally answered by anyone.

Buddhism, however, disruptive though it was, has had some constructive influences on Chinese character. It gave the people a wider outlook, through the mere fact that it was of foreign origin, and presented, in more tangible form than Taoism had done, a cosmogony ranging to the utmost bounds of human thought. Its conceptions of the Celestial Buddhas, and of the possibility of approach to them, or their earthly manifestations, through prayer, made possible for the masses higher conceptions of that spiritual activity, and of the deities themselves, with scope for the expression of religious emotion. The altruistic ideal of the Bodhisattva, consecrating the mystery of sacrifice, offered a grateful contrast to the somewhat self-centred, superior outlook of the Chinese Sage, and doubtless helped to soften it.

It is the custom to describe the present day state of Buddhism in China as hopelessly corrupt, and to doubt that the doctrine can adapt itself to the advancing needs of the human spirit. But he would be rash who declared it dead. There is much life in it in Japan, where it is showing itself capable of development on the lines of modern thought. It still has its appeal to certain fundamental yearnings of human nature, and may play its part in the portentous modern “ Pan-Asian ” movement for the revival of Asiatic civilization.

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## BOOK II

### THE CONFUCIAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER V. THE GREAT EDICTS

CHAPTER VI. "THE FIRST REVOLUTION"

CHAPTER VII. THE MONGOLS

CHAPTER VIII. THE CHINESE RENAISSANCE

CHAPTER IX. THE CYCLE OF DECAY





## CHAPTER V

### THE GREAT EDICTS

As the Han dynasty ran its course the Confucians came to identify themselves more and more with the ideal of a unified State, and to recognize the Emperor as its "father" and head. But practical difficulties were great. The Empire was becoming truly vast, and its organization was not yet adequate to bind the various parts together. Risings and rebellions, inspired by local rivalries and the ambitions of adventurers, increased.

By the year A.D. 220 the First Empire collapses with the abdication of the last Han Emperor, Hien Ti. There follows a long and unprofitable "Warlike Period" of nearly 400 years, in which the tribal anarchy of pre-Han days resumes its sway, though on a much wider scale. At one time we can distinguish no less than nine large States within the boundaries of China Proper, and there were many smaller ones. The Outlying Lands fell away from their allegiance, and Tatar inroads aggravated the disorders.

Religious dissensions now added fuel to personal, tribal and dynastic rivalries, and the conditions may be compared with the period of religious wars in Europe. We find Buddhism, favoured in one court and rejected in another, one of the decisive factors, whilst alternating persecutions and revivals mark the vicissitudes of its career.

So the struggle swayed, whilst the conflicting powers of "yang" and "yin" clashed out the hurrying discords, and the Sages sighed vainly for the lost harmonies of the past.

Perhaps the cruellest blow to China's material fortunes in this sad period was the betrayal of the silk secret, whereby the key of the staple trade with the West was lost. But it was more than a material blow. The consequent restricted demand for the silk trade, already difficult in the enduring anarchy of Central Asia, meant the cutting off of all substantial foreign intercourse, and the beginning of the real isolation of China.



Buddhism, with its most pessimistic implications, gained renewed strength, feeding on the miseries of the times. It reached its apogee in the reign of Wu Ti (A.D. 502-550), who held the South-Eastern provinces, with his capital at Nanking. He received a visit from the great Buddhist apostle Bodhidharma, and was so influenced by him as to make, like the Christian Pope whom Dante sternly placed in Hell, "the great refusal," and retire into a monastery. This despairing gesture was too much for the practical Chinese temperament. The Confucians made the most of it, demanding the relegation of the "Church" to its own sphere, and their influence began to grow. They worked, as always, from below, beginning with the individual, spreading the light of the old teachings, and calling on their pupils to apply them to the problems of the day.

By the end of the Sixth Century A.D. a virile dynasty, the Soui, was asserting itself in the North. It favoured the Confucians. A capital was established at Loyang (in Honan), and the conquest of the South was begun. Confucian ideas, spurning negative Buddhism, propounded great schemes for public works and the restoration of material well-being.

But the Soui dynasty was only a forerunner, preparing the way for something greater, and the year A.D. 618 witnessed the establishment of the real Second Empire, that of the T'ang, in the ancient capital of the First Emperor at Sianfu. The Dynasty, and the later offshoots of its decline, endured for over 300 years, till A.D. 936.

Its real founders were, however, the great T'ai Tsung (627-650) and his gifted and cultured wife, Chang Sui-chi. He made his position clear by a definite opposition to any Buddhist (or as we should say, "church") influence in political affairs. Buddhism must confine itself to its own sphere, but Confucianism, "for the Chinese," as the Emperor declared, "what water is for fishes," was to be the guide in mundane things.

Confucius accordingly was canonised, and his temples, or more properly, Memorial Halls, were set up throughout the land, the cult thus becoming a unifying element. But the really practical measures by which the defects in Han organization were remedied were announced in the Great Edicts, that established the permanent Civil Service of the



Empire. Its strength lay in the double loyalty it owed—not only to the Emperor, who, at best, was a fallible human being, but also to something more stable and reliable, the Confucian tradition.

For its education, six colleges were founded at the Capital, with chairs of law, calligraphy, and mathematics. A proportion of places was open to all classes, and entry was regulated by an ordered system of grading, begun in the lower provincial examinations, and concluding in the higher at the capital. The papers of a select few were to undergo the awe-inspiring honour of consideration by the Emperor himself. Great would be the rejoicings in any village should a youthful member of its community achieve such distinction!

A Board of the Ministry of Rites (corresponding to our Civil Service Commission) supervised the examinations, whilst, wisely, another Board made the appointments. In the Eighth Century the old Imperial Academy of the Han was re-founded, as the Han-lin. Its members were the finest scholars of the Empire. They had charge of literary and historical works, and the duty also of composing eulogies to great men, sacrificial prayers, and honours to members of the Imperial family.

The Service, though not a closed one, tended to become so, since entry to it (as with us now) required education, intelligence, and ability to pass examinations, and its members became, in practice, a class apart, the “literati,” or Confucians, as we may continue to call them. Their aloofness, tempered though it was by the occasional success of candidates of humble origin, was accentuated by the bureaucratic nature of the service.

The Government did indeed undertake useful public works, but its real business was to maintain order and harmony, to “inspect-soothe” as the Chinese phrase has it, to create the conditions under which the people might peacefully acquire wealth for themselves. The official was expected to be aloof, and disinterested, employing tact, management and compromise for the settlement of social and economic difficulties. He was wisely forbidden to engage in trade and production, and any government activities of the kind would be justly looked upon with suspicion as offering increased scope for corruption.



The administration of Justice was a weak feature, becoming more noticeable as society, and its disputes, became more complicated. Small matters could still be dealt with by the village Headman, but larger ones had to come before the official's court. Here there was no separation of function, the administrator being also judge. Moreover there was no proper code to check possible vagaries, for the classical education was supposed to give sufficient guidance and sense of justice and equity. In theory this was well enough, and good maxims certainly abounded. Doubtless where officials really had imbibed the spirit of the Classics, their judgments were often sounder than if they had been hampered by a rigid code. There was certainly less scope for the cunning lawyer, learned in the ways of obstructing the course of justice.

The scope for tyranny and abuse, however, is obvious. Compromise, management, willingness to "settle," are dangerous things in matters of justice, and grow too easily into corruption and bribery. The temptations for an administrator exercising judicial powers are especially great, and with any weakening of higher supervision, too many would succumb. Whilst a true Confucian would be an efficient and honest judge, such became sufficiently rare to call for remark.

Torture, as in Europe, was employed to secure evidence. Punishments, as everywhere then, were ugly and cruel, and purely deterrent. There were cages and cangues (a weight worn round the neck), amputations, slicing, lingering death. Prisons were terrible affairs, where the victims (like our debtors in the last century) depended on charity or temple funds for food. The Emperor, however, had the right of pardon, and later, under the Sung, the power of life and death was reserved to him.

T'ai Tsung also reorganized the army, and here we touch a matter having an important bearing on events of to-day.

In China, which never had a feudal system in our sense to raise the status of the sword, the soldier stood low in the social scale; and fighting was held (by the Sages) to be a low and barbarous, if occasionally necessary, practice. The grim necessity, indeed, remained. For China, like modern Germany, was only united by the sword, and there was



need to maintain internal peace, to guard the frontiers, and, perhaps, recover the Outlying Lands.

But the danger was that the sword might divide again what it had united, as in the 400 years' "Warlike Period," and the problem was to have an efficient army with loyal leaders.

The solution, in its fundamentals, was similar to that employed by us after the abandonment of the feudal system with its disruptive consequences.

The officer class was drawn from the Confucians, with their double loyalty—to the Confucian tradition, and the Emperor. The technical science of war was simple and straightforward. The Classics (as with us) provided the basis of character, necessary for leadership, and the necessary codes of honour for conduct in victory or defeat. It is true that, as a rule, since the military profession was despised, only those who failed to take the higher degrees would specialise in military matters. Nevertheless the higher ranks would be quite capable of carrying out administrative duties, and, in fact, it was usual to set up Military Governorships in the Outlying Lands. But in China Proper it was a wise rule, broken only in exceptional circumstances, that, as with us, military officers functioning as such should not hold administrative power, but should be subordinate in civil matters, to the civil power. This was a real check on any ambitious official acquiring the position of a European feudal lord, and as a further precaution it became the rule not to appoint high officials to posts in their own provinces. The peculiar organization of the Manchus necessitated some modification of the system, but the basic principle of separation of military and administrative powers was upheld till the evil day when Yuan Shih-kai, the First President, broke it, and appointed his "Tuchuns," or Army Chiefs, with civil authority, after the fashion of Cromwell's Major-Generals. There was then, alas, no Emperor, nor real respect for the Confucian tradition.

There was nothing that could be called a Navy, nor indeed any need for one. Ships, as with us, were mere transports, and so remained till much later.

The social gap between officer and rank and file was great. The quotas of the latter were raised as required from the



village communities, and the levy was a good opportunity for getting rid of their less desirable members, who would probably not be welcomed if they returned safely. (Triumphal arches in China were put up to successful scholars, not to returned heroes!) There were, indeed, cases of men rising from the ranks to higher commands, but these, as with us, were rare, and usually occurred only in disordered times.

Whilst we will accept the Sage's view that war is a hateful thing, it may be questioned whether the Chinese attitude of contempt for the soldier was altogether good for the development of national character. So long as war does exist, the soldier's self-respect must be preserved, and the military virtues of patriotism, discipline, and self-sacrifice recognised for their part in that development. They may then, in more civilized days, become sublimated as the true civic virtues, in which the Chinese have hitherto been somewhat lacking.

In T'ang days, anyhow, and for long after, war was still a stern necessity, and the peasant troops, with their classically educated officers strove to defend and extend the frontiers, and to reconquer the Outlying Lands.

Korea, after an unsuccessful intervention by the Japanese, was conquered in A.D. 674, and it seems to have been about this time that the Chinese began to colonize the districts about the Liao River, in the Tatar lands of what we now call South Manchuria.

The recovery of the Central Asian lands began already in T'ai Tsung's reign, and garrisons and military Governorships were established there. Communications were thus restored with the West, and India; and embassies were received from Nepal, Magadha, Persia, and Constantinople. Once more the widening horizons were opening. But now arose the new barrier of Islam, with expansive energies to press over into the reconquered Turkish lands, encouraging renewed resistance there, and beyond, into China Proper, into Kansu and Shensi in the North, and Yunnan in the South. The overland trade with Europe, in consequence, did not resume its former dimensions, and isolation continued.

In China itself Islam was a real disturbing factor. Its converts never sought to adapt their outlook to the general



Chinese one, and they have remained a people apart, with interests linked to their co-religionists in Turkestan, and the Moslem lands outside the Empire. They have always been, of course, a minority, but a considerable one, of, now, ten to fifteen millions in China Proper, with another two millions or so in Chinese Turkestan. They have made their discordant presence felt in the frequent rebellions we shall have to record.

The arrival, recorded on the famous Sianfu tablet discovered in A.D. 1625, of the Nestorian Christians in A.D. 635, was perhaps another reaction of the triumph of Islam in Syria and Persia. As with Buddhism, there was a sufficient readiness to listen to the new doctrine. It was examined by the Sages to see whether it would fit into the Chinese scheme. The verdict was favourable. An edict sanctioned the teaching, and allowed the erection of a monastery, on condition of a due subordination. For the Emperor, like any Henry VIII, required the tablet of his supremacy to be set up in all temples, Taoist, Buddhist and Christian. It is probable that he was not unwilling to encourage a rival to Buddhism. There were in fact dissensions between the two communities, whose doctrines seem, however, to have mutually influenced one another. Eventually Nestorian Christianity fell, like Buddhism, under condemnation for its monastic, ascetic, anti-social implications. It had not the foothold of its rival, nor its scope nor willingness to compromise, and the edict of A.D. 845, banishing the monks and nuns, was effective. But the secular community was still existing in Mongol times. It seems to have disappeared in the early days of the Ming, apparently dying a natural death, and Christianity's part in the evolution of Chinese culture was postponed till a later day, when it was to intervene again with more pregnant consequences.

## CHAPTER VI

### “ THE FIRST REVOLUTION ”

THE Second Empire was showing signs of decay within 100 years of the death of the great T'ai Tsung. The frequent campaigns in Central Asia were a great strain upon its resources, justified though they may have been by Tatar and Moslem menace. It would perhaps have been better to have concentrated on the internal reconstruction so well begun, and left the Outlying Lands to themselves, trusting to the Great Wall for defence. Certainly a China strong internally should have been able to defy both Turks and Tatars. But the real decay came from within, and when it had advanced not even the Great Wall could keep out the barbarian forces pressing upon Chinese civilization. The causes are common to all human story, beginning with the inability of men to bear prosperity.

The Confucian State was based, in theory, on the characters of the individuals composing it. In practice too much depended on the head, the Son of Heaven, the “ Father ” of the great State family, and corruption there spread swiftly down. The process was hastened by the inveterate nepotism of Chinese family life. The Court's method for countering this by the employment of the Eunuch was not happy in its results—then or later. The Eunuch is held to be cut off from the family ties and obligations, and so free to transfer the qualities of devotion and fidelity to a master or mistress. He has, indeed, often proved a faithful servant in Chinese history, but opportunity, and the impulse to compensate the loss of ordinary human relationships by the acquisition of wealth and power, have usually made him a willing instrument of corruption and tyranny.

The Confucians found other causes of degeneration in Buddhist and Taoist influences at Court, their interference in political affairs, and addiction to charms and magic, with a consequent depreciation of the practical Confucian ethic and outlook. Hence frequent official persecutions. It is



but fair to observe, however, that the increased influence of those mystical doctrines, and of Christianity also, at this time, may have been a healthy reaction from the worldliness induced by revived prosperity.

Nevertheless, the self-contained village community went on, unless directly destroyed by invader or brigand, and the spaces were wide enough to prevent that happening on any too comprehensive a scale. That is why China has gone on, and still goes on.

At the worst the Poets and Sages could still find peaceful spots, where they could at least dream about the ideal harmony, and write about it.

“ A jade kettle with a promise of spring,  
A shower on the thatched hut  
Wherein sits a gentle scholar,  
With tall bamboos growing right and left,  
The white clouds in the newly clear sky,  
The birds flitting in the depths of the trees.  
Then pillowed on his lute in the green shade,  
A waterfall tumbling overhead,  
Leaves dropping, not a word spoken,  
The man placid like a chrysanthemum,  
Noting down the flower-glory of the season,  
A book well worthy to be read.”

(Ssu-k'ung Tu—834-008. Trans. by H. A. Giles,  
*History of Chinese Literature.*)

or could exclaim with Li Po (705-762) :

“ The birds have all flown to their roost in the tree,  
The last cloud has floated lazily by ;  
But we never tire of each other, not we,  
As we sit there together—the mountains and I ! ”  
(Trans. H. A. Giles.)

The philosopher could accuse the selfishness of Buddhist seekers after salvation :

“ On Self the Wise Man never rests his eye,  
His to relieve the doom of human kind ;  
No fairy palaces beyond the sky,  
Rewards to come, are present to his mind.”  
Ch'en Tzu-ang (656-698). (Trans. H. A. Giles.)

And the lover could touch the chords of every human heart with the sigh that echoes throughout the ages :

“ After parting, dreams possessed me,  
And I wandered you know where,  
And we sat in the verandah,  
And you sang the sweet old air.  
Then I woke, with no one near me  
Save the moon, still shining on,  
And lighting up dead petals  
Which like you have passed and gone.”  
Chang Pi, c. 900. (Trans. H. A. Giles.)

There are many masterpieces of literature and art to bear witness to the reality of the culture of the T'ang period. Before the end of it, and clear evidence that the need had arisen, came the invention of printing, 500 years before Europe achieved it. The political scene was darkened by seventy years of wars with Tatars, Turks and Tibetans, confusion, rebellion, plots and debaucheries, yet the moment was a fortunate one. The dismal anarchy was ending, and China was to experience a real “ Revolution.”

We are calling the change the “ First Revolution ” claiming as much justification as Shih Hwang Ti had in calling himself “ First Emperor.”

The T'ang, for all their later failures, had at least established the firm basis of Empire in a real governing class and bureaucracy. These might renounce one of their loyalties—to an Emperor unworthy of it. The other was founded on the rock of Confucian tradition, and in the palpable need for change the official class could yet prevent the disruption that had ensued on the fall of the Han, and was threatening again already with the establishment of a number of independent States, chiefly in the South. The patriarchal weapon of “ remonstrance ” had failed in the wider organization of an Empire, but there remained the final argument of Confucian political theory as propounded by the Second Master.

When corruption in the body politic has passed all bounds, when anarchy was arising, when oppression replaced fatherly (and motherly) care, and the Rulers would not heed (they probably did not hear) the voices raised in complaint, the sovereignty reverted to the People, who might declare the Mandate of Heaven withdrawn from an unworthy bearer.

The appropriate signs accordingly appeared in the Heavens. “ The Empire,” it was declared by those who could read



them, “ is without a Master.” But there must be no lapse to anarchy, and so the message went on : “ We shall give it one.”

The Man of Destiny duly appeared—a certain Chao Kwang-yu. He was a Confucian. The Mandate of Heaven was declared to have fallen upon him, and in the year A.D. 960 the Army, with its Confucian officers, proclaimed him Emperor. He took the name of T'ai Tsu, and founded the Sung, the third of the great Imperial dynasties, setting up his capital at Kaifeng (Honan), and in this effective change, brought about by the will of a people, we see clear evidence of the establishment of a real national feeling, the richest fruit of the work of T'ai Tsung.

The Confucian Empire was completely re-established within about twenty years. The privileges of the lettered classes were restored, and Buddhist and Taoist influences reprehended. Much literary progress ensued, stimulated by the invention of printing. There is a long and fruitful list of histories, dictionaries, books of precepts, and medical and scientific works, with a great encyclopædia of knowledge. The Central Power was strengthened, and the power of life and death reserved to it. At the same time the Confucians sought to give more practical content to the constitutional right of admonition and remonstrance.

An official Censorate was set up. The Censors were to receive complaints from the people, and present them to authority. There was an obvious danger in confiding such a function to a Government official, and the thoughtful shook their heads over the matter. “ Of old,” comments the historian Ssu Ma-kwang, “ every one was free to admonish. Now . . .” It had become an office, but what other solution was practicable in a real Empire of such extent ? At least the office was sometimes worthily filled, and the bold remonstrance of a fearless Censor was not to be disregarded even by the most frivolous or vicious of Emperors. It still remains a cherished constitutional principle in these republican days.

That the Confucians of the Sung period were progressively minded is shown by their efforts to find some compromise with the Buddhist Church. It had always been a reproach against the Confucians that they ignored the Unseen World,



and we find them now trying to answer some of the deeper problems arising from man's spiritual nature. There results some incorporation of Buddhist and Taoist ideas into the Confucian scheme, so that we see a beginning of the process through which eventually the cultured Chinese came to regard himself as heir to all the systems, culling from each what occasion required. But there was still plenty of scope for rivalry, especially in the political sphere.

About the middle of the Eleventh Century there appeared the alarming "reformer," Wang An-shih, whose proposals have a strangely modern ring. They are evidence of the greatly increased self-consciousness of the people, as also of the growth of economic pressure on the peasant and industrial classes. The former were falling into the hands of the money-lender; mortgages were being foreclosed; an oppressive landlord class was springing up. The fruits of the soil, too, were getting into the hands of those who knew how to manipulate supplies and prices for their own benefit, and with the consequent poverty of the peasant, the artisan found work hard to obtain except to supply the luxuries of the rich. It was not a pleasing prospect for the Father of the People, nor the Confucian officials, though too many of the latter were doubtless hand-in-glove with the usurers and monopolists. Thus the Reformer's drastic proposals were at first favourably considered.

He did not mince matters. Heavy taxation should relieve the rich of their ill-gotten gains, and the State should prevent future evils by direct control, in the People's interest, of production, distribution and exchange. The large estates must be resumed and broken up. The State should fix prices, distribute seed, and provide work for all.

It was a comprehensive scheme, that had however to wait 800 years for its attempted realization in a neighbouring land! China was not quite ready for it. It is probable that there was some break-up of unfairly won estates, and a considerable restoration of peasant ownership, but the officials, who usually looked to investing their savings in land, soon began to gather in opposition to the schemes. They could voice the traditional objections to Civil Servants engaging in production and trade.

The Reformer disappeared; his name-tablet was removed



from the Confucian temple ; and this final mark of disapproval of him and his schemes would serve to warn similar adventurers.

But in the mysterious conflict of “ yang ” and “ yin ” a less-easily exorcised force flung into the Chinese scene. It overthrew completely the balance of circumstance, and left the Sages to mourn again for the lost harmony. It was not new—very few things are in China—but it came with an unknown violence, that overthrew the great Confucian Empire, and imposed upon the Chinese, in contempt of their newly-born national spirit, their first experience of foreign conquest.

It was the Coming of the Tatars.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MONGOLS

THE lands of the Tatar tribes stretched from the borders of Korea and the Sea of Japan to the Altai Mountains and the Tien Shan, more than 2,500 miles to the West. The northern boundaries with Siberia are sufficiently marked by the Amur River, and the mountain ranges trending East and West, roughly along the fiftieth parallel, whilst to the South the great barrier of the Kuen Lun and the Nan Shan guards the vast plateau of Tibet. The greatest width north and south is about 850 miles.

It is convenient to divide this immense country into four main sections : that now known as Manchuria, with an area of 380,000 square miles ; and the three divisions of Mongolia Proper : Inner Mongolia, which includes the district of Jehol, north of the Great Wall ; Outer Mongolia ; and the great stretch of the Gobi desert between them ; with a total area of some 1,300,000 square miles. Manchuria presents a considerable area of low flat plain, bordered by high ranges on north and east and west. Mongolia proper, separated from Manchuria and Jehol by the Khingan Mountains (6,500 to 4,800 feet) consists of vast and almost entirely treeless steppes at levels of from 3,000 to 5,000 feet, with mountain ranges having a general west and east trend rising to heights of 7,000 to 9,000 feet. The vast desert that crosses its centre fills the air above with great quantities of wind-born dust, which is carried over the moister inhabitable lands to north and south. There, streams running into salty inland lakes, and occasional rains provide sufficient moisture for coarse pasture grasses, on which feed the visible wealth of cattle, horse, sheep, goats and camels. In the northern parts, where a few forests exist on the mountain slopes, the bitter winter cold has evolved fur-bearing animals whose pelts provide a source of human comfort and of trade.

The population of Mongolia proper is estimated now at



about two millions. We have no certain knowledge what it was in the days of which we write, but it may well have been more. The people were organized in tribes, or "Banners," each, in theory, with its own territory, where it dwelt in semi-nomadic fashion, having usually one abode in the hot summer, and another, more sheltered, in the bitter winter. They did not till the unyielding ground, but depended for food, fuel, and clothing on their herds. Other things could be got by exchange for hides, wool, and furs, or more crudely by raids into happier lands. Each tribe was ruled by an hereditary prince, with practically unlimited powers. Laws were simple and straightforward, as were the crimes they dealt with, and these were punishable by a regular scale of fines. As the original tribe increased in numbers, offshoots broke off to acquire fresh districts, but they seem usually to have kept a connection with the parent tribe, forming a unit of loosely bound groups known as the Aimak.

The heads of the tribes were naturally jealous of outside interference, or any organization tending to restrict their powers, but when poverty and hunger turned the thoughts of the wild tent-dwellers to richer lands, the unity necessary for successful invasion declared the importance of single leadership. A leader, a Khan, could always be found when the times demanded one, but the tribal chiefs still kept their local authority, and claimed the right to be heard in general assembly on matters of common concern, to approve the actions of the Khan, and select or confirm his successor.

The people and their ways have changed little, though there may have been some further desiccation of the land in the last thousand years. But there are changes in the world around. It will no longer be possible for Mongol hordes to sweep over China, Western Asia, Europe, to plunder and ravage. On the contrary, the neighbouring countries are beginning to inquire whether, under scientific organization and method the vast steppe lands might not become the home of their own surplus populations. Manchuria has already given answers to this question surprising to those who recall its age-long barrenness. Mongolia may do the same.

But a thousand years ago, and before that, the solution of the Mongol population problem lay, apart from internecine feuds, in raiding possibilities beyond the frontiers. China



was the nearest neighbour worth such attentions. Hence the keen interest of the tribes in Chinese politics.

The Sung Dynasty soon began to follow those courses of decay which the historian, contemplating the fate of empires and kingdoms, is tempted to declare inevitable. The Confucian Classics, treated as a means of passing examinations in order to secure official posts, failed to provide checks against the corruption of character. Nor could the Buddhist religion supply the adequate inspirations. The teachings were hard to grasp ; the precepts, for most, beyond human capacity. In the political sphere the old dispute between Taoists and Confucians revived. The former pressed their theories of Divine Right, become more plausible in the new emphasis laid upon the central power. They reinforced their arguments by characteristic degrading appeals to magic and the black arts, wherein signs could be read to gratify the Imperial pride, whilst the Son of Heaven was flattered by the expectation of testifying in his person to the virtues of the Elixir of Life. The triumph of the first Taoist Pope was recalled, and his descendant, Chang Yu Hwang-ti, was in 1116 deified as the God of Hell. The Confucians declaimed strongly against the corrupting influences of such teachings, and opposed the doctrine of Divine Right with the weapon of the Censorship. The victory swayed now to this side, now to that. The Emperor Ch'eng Tsung (998-1023) fell under Taoist influences, but the Confucians were ascendant in the Regency of his Empress that followed, and the chief Taoist leader suffered the common lot of " fallen " ministers in those days. Later the Taoists recovered some power, but on the whole Confucian influences triumphed. The party struggle accentuated the growing weakness and corruption of the Empire, which steadily became more apparent to the observant barbarians beyond the Great Wall.

The times were accordingly propitious for the formation of a Tatar League. One known as the Kin was set up in Manchuria in 1115 under a certain Akouta. The Chinese Emperor, who had been having some trouble with other Tatar tribes in Liaotung, foolishly invited the aid of the Kin to expel them. This was soon done, and the eager " allies " established themselves in dangerous proximity to the Chinese borders. Within five years they had crossed the Great Wall,



and even the Yellow River, and overrun all the Northern Provinces. In 1126 the Capital, Kaifeng, fell after a terrible siege, and the new Emperor withdrew to Nanking, and later to Hangchow, where the courageous Empress Mong-chi urged resistance and reform.

The Kin established a capital on the site of the later Peking, and China was divided into two parts, between which a fierce conflict was renewed. The Kin power eventually extended to the Yangtze, but the characteristic dissensions within the League weakened its power. Moreover news of their fruitful adventures reached the ears of the kindred tribes of Mongolia, and soon the Mongol Leagues were attacking the Kin. This enabled the Chinese to hold their own in the South, and even to recover some lost ground. But the approaching ruin of the Kin opened the way for a more terrible foe.

About the year 1162 there was born to Yussugei, the head of the chief Mongol League, and his wife Ogelen Eke, a boy called Temujin, to be better known, later, to all the world as Jenghiz, the Most Mighty Khan. He was young when his father died, and the League seemed likely to break up. But Ogelen Eke, her mother's wit quickened by the emergency, was able to produce forceful arguments from the wealth and weakness of China, and of other lands, more vaguely known, in the West, hight Samarkand and Baghdad, all doubtless exaggerated in popular report, but having a basis of truth. The Mongols were willing to be convinced, and Temujin was duly acclaimed Khan.

Early in the thirteenth century he crossed the Nan Shan, and attacked some of the Tatar leagues established in the North-West. There was now wild confusion everywhere. The main force of the Kin, weakened by the falling away of tribes who preferred to fight amongst themselves, were ranged against the Chinese Sung along the line of the Yangtze. Some sections in the north went over to Jenghiz as he advanced outside the Great Wall, eastward to Liaotung. The resentful Sung blindly offered their aid to the victorious barbarians, who, in 1213, pressed through the Great Wall. The Kin, assailed in North and South, fought desperately, and some of the tribes, alarmed by Mongol progress, returned to their allegiance. Jenghiz himself withdrew to carry his arms



towards Europe. But in 1225 the chief Tatar allies of the Kin were crushed in a great battle on the frozen waters of the Yellow River. Nine years later, in 1234, the Kin made their last stand against the combined forces of the Mongols and Sung at Tsaichow in Shantung, where their Khan perished in the burning ruins.

The Sung had now to reap the penalties of their short-sightedness. The Mongols were ill people to deal with when sharing spoils of victory. They soon turned on their feeble allies. In 1251 the great Kublai was appointed to command the Mongol forces to complete the conquest. The Chinese made bold efforts for resistance and reform. The Taoists with their vain charms and magic were denounced by an Imperial edict, and Chinese valour displayed itself in the four-year siege of Siangyang on the Han River.

Kublai, however, was more than a barbarian warrior. Fifty years of world conquest had widened the outlook of the rude Tatars, had enabled them to produce statesmen, to show appreciation of civilization and culture, and of the worth of their exponents. The Great Khan set himself to win the favour of the Confucians, who could again justify transferring one of their loyalties by pointing to the corruptions, disorders and disasters of the times as clear proof that the Mandate of Heaven to the Sung was exhausted. The Khan's policy made the way easy for them. He confirmed a proportion of the officials in their places, and ordered a Confucian temple to be erected in his new city of Khan-baluk, the later Peking, founded near the ruins of the former Tatar capital. The war continued for a few desperate years, marked by the gallant exploits of the Chinese naval hero, Chang Chi-kia, but in 1278 the last of the Imperial Sung perished at the mouth of the Canton River. Next year a great hurricane engulfed Chang Chi-kia, his fleet and the last hope of the Chinese Nationalists. In 1280 Kublai Khan announced the end of the struggle by the proclamation of the Yuen Dynasty, and emphasized his alliance with the Confucians by a fresh edict against the Taoists, whose mystic idealism, to do them justice, inclined them to support the national side. A little later the Confucians were further gratified by the transference of the Han-lin College to a palace assigned to it in the new capital.



China was re-united—under an alien ruler. But this first alien dynasty was a misfortune for her. It helped to crush the sense of national unity which the Han Dynasty first, and later the T'ang and Sung had done much to establish. The ready transference of loyalty and political allegiance by the official class must have created a sense of indifference about those things. Social conditions accentuated an attitude of mind which still exists, for the self-contained village communities were unlikely to be troubled by "nationalist" theories. An experience of "nationalism," within due bounds, is however good for the development of character, and the sense of freedom and liberty of a people. The Mongol conquest, and the judicious policy of Kublai helped to delay the realization of such an experience and created a precedent to be followed at a later day, and with more lasting consequences, when the conquering Manchus swept down upon Peking.

The brief reign of the Great Khan, however, might well be held to justify the action of the Confucians. The glories of the Imperial capital, the vast wealth and commerce of the Empire, astonished the Europe that heard the descriptions of Marco Polo. The Khan indeed preferred a tent in the midst of his immense city that covered 36 square miles of ground, but it was a tent adorned with silk and silver and gold. There was hunting, feasting, music and plays, and the gay festivals and fairs always dear to the Chinese heart. In administration the Mongols nominally held the higher posts, but the Confucian Civil Service effectually resumed its sway, functioning through Councils and Boards. Horse tracks for posts and couriers helped to make it an informed civil service, and the extension of the canal system enabled better distribution of supplies, and organization for famine relief. The revenues, of gold and salt and sugar, were immense, and were increased by a great revival of commerce, mainly in drugs and spices and precious stones, inspired and made possible by the far flung sway of the Mongols that had brought the two ends of the world into contact once more. Ships from India came to Canton and Chinese junks with four to five masts, 50 or 60 cabins, and water-tight compartments, crossed the Indian Ocean. The growing needs of trade required an expanded currency, which was duly, and at first properly, supplied by



the issue of paper money made from the bark of the already indispensable mulberry tree. The bounds of Empire were extended again to Korea, but expeditions to the Southern regions of Burma and Indo-China were checked by the damp tropical heats, rather than the valour of the enemy. On the other hand the Great Armada against Japan was flung back by the invincible islanders.

Kublai, though he had diplomatically favoured the Confucians, could not find spiritual satisfaction in their still too rigid outlook. He turned to Buddhism. There is doubtless something in the hard, melancholy nature of the Mongol, born of his dreary land, that renders him receptive of the stern pessimism of Buddhism, whilst its renunciation of earthly joys makes a virtue of necessity in a land where such joys are few. Such considerations apply with even more force to the grim plateau of Tibet, where Buddhism had been established since the beginning of the Seventh Century. Kublai, after conquering most of the land, laid the foundations of a theocratic state there, by conferring temporal power on the Head-Priest, or Lama, of the great Sakya Monastery. From that time, though there were changes in the dynasties of the priest-kings, the Grand Lama became the head of the Chinese Buddhist church. Tibet thus became the "Papal State" of Eastern Asia, and a large proportion of its population devoted itself to monasticism, and mystic speculation. The Confucians, who might have deprecated the new prominence given to the Church, could regard the relegation of its headquarters to that distant and desolate land as a renunciation of any future interference in Chinese politics, and in fact, Buddhism did cease to play an active political rôle.

The Khan also showed interest in the small Nestorian community, and an embassy was received from the Pope of Rome, but matters did not go further then.

The Empire of the Great Khans would seem to have contained the elements of stability. Yet it endured less than a hundred years. Its composition was incongruous. The Mongols least of all were fitted in character and temperament to withstand the strain of prosperity. The inveterate tribal dissensions renewed themselves in the home land. The splendour and luxury that dazzled the eyes of Marco Polo soon fell away to vice, gluttony, drunkenness, and all corruptions, whose



visible evidences were the extravagant palaces of the Mongol princes. The consequent economic disorders led to the depreciation of Kublai's paper money, for none cared to maintain it at its proper proportion to the wealth produced for exchange. The Tatar Emperors naturally gave undue prominence to the military chiefs, according them authority over the civilians. The Confucians were consequently alienated, and the Mongols had to learn the dangers of displeasing that powerful class.

An evil legacy of the Mongol period was the practice of foot-binding. It was a defensive measure, employed only, of course, by the wealthier classes of Chinese. If the Revolution of 1911 were to do no more than condemn this bad thing, and restore their natural freedom and status to women, it would justify itself to future generations.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHINESE RENAISSANCE

DISCONTENT grew rapidly.

The village communities and artisan guilds, accustomed to meet to deal with questions of social or professional welfare, would readily turn their thoughts to the prevailing disorders. Discussion on such matters as the cleansing of a well, the raising of funds for the next festival, for additional scholarships, the support of "Ah Sing's" widow, would soon turn to larger, graver issues. For what could it profit to consider those things, when a tyrannous and corrupt government would take all in taxes, unless, indeed those robber bands one was beginning to hear about, were first in the field? When such was the state of mind of the people it was not difficult for wandering emissaries under the guise of Taoist or Buddhist priests and monks to co-ordinate the activities of local groups, and to give them a pseudo-religious sanction, in the expectation that the Unseen Powers, themselves distressed by the lack of harmony in human affairs, would come directly to mankind's aid.

The Secret Societies which arose in some such fashion in China helped to create the political consciousness of the people. It was doubtless unfortunate for China that her people's political education took this form. It has made her politics secret, furtive, underhand, elusive, and unhealthily confounded with rank popular superstitions. It has meant a characteristic lack of principle in their conduct, since the goal was too often purely utilitarian, and even petty. Interest tended to cease with the attainment of the immediate object, whilst the end, such as it was, justified any means. But these things are the common stuff of human actions everywhere, and the Chinese did not exhibit in them a nature intrinsically different from the rest of mankind.

The inner history of the Societies is, from the nature of the case, little known. The earliest seems to have been the great Hung, or Triad, so-called because one of its symbols is the



△. It dates from the end of the Fourth Century, A.D., following the victory of one of the anti-Buddhist States in the then tribal anarchy, and a consequent massacre of Buddhist monks. It proposed the restoration of Buddhism, but subsequently, when the Buddhist Church had virtually abandoned direct intervention in politics, the Hung became a means of voicing organized discontent in mere mundane matters. But it still retained, as it continued to do in the Nineteenth Century, the evidences of its quasi-religious origins in its ritualistic ceremonies, where Buddhist and Taoist conceptions mingle to symbolize the soul's journey round the Wheel, and the ultimate quest for mystic union with the Supreme Being, for the Harmony of the Tao. Historical tableaux depicting the founding of the Society, and the persecutions suffered by it, give reality and significance to the ceremonial washing, robing, and the oath of blood brotherhood consecrated by an actual drawing and drinking of the blood of those present. In peaceful times, when there is harmony of "yang" and "yin," it is little heard of, but when the discords clash out, the mysterious Order seems to waken into life.

It was in 1344, but fifty years after the death of the Great Khan, that its activities again became manifest. It would hardly be correct to describe the movement as "nationalist," anyhow at first. It was the protest of the common people, gathered in their social groups, against the overpowering ills crushing their simple lives, and co-ordinated by the all-pervading activities of the Hung. The Mandate of Heaven being withdrawn from the barbarian conquerors, the heavenly signs would show clearly the source of a new salvation. We have witnessed similar beliefs in our Europe of the Twentieth Century. But certainly, however the signs were produced, the magicians and conspirators in China who read them in the Fourteenth Century were singularly justified, for the new saviour, Chu Yuan-chang, was unquestionably one of the world's great men.

He is said to have sprung from the soil, from ordinary peasant stock. He apparently joined the Buddhist priesthood as a novice, and thus, no doubt, came into touch with the Hung, now awakening to new activities. The magic arts of his associates supplied the signs necessary to impress the popular imagination, but his real power must have lain in



his strong personality, organizing capacity, and ability to adapt available means to practical ends. The first enabled him to assume authority over the rude minds of the increasing brigand bands ; with the others he directed their activities to fruitful purposes and prepared the way for a reformed and rejuvenated Empire. Soon the dissatisfied Confucians gathered to his standard, and it became certain that the movement would not fall away to mere rapine and plunder.

In 1355 Chu captured Nanking, which he made his Capital. He was aided in his victorious course by the usual dissensions amongst the Tatars, by revolts in Korea and in Mongolia itself. In September, 1367, the Great Army under Chu's brave and disinterested General Su-ta, "pure and clear as the sun," who loved not women, and did not amass wealth, crossed the Yellow River. Peking was stormed, and the last Mongol Emperor, Shun Ti, fled to the East, and then to Mongolia, where he and his family were actually captured by the Chinese in a remarkable campaign some three years later. Meanwhile, at the beginning of 1368, the ex-peasant and Buddhist novice, taking the reign-title of Hung Wu, proclaimed the Ming (Bright) Dynasty, with its Capital at Nanking. A Chinese Renaissance had begun. A few years previously (about 1360) there was born in a Tatar camp in what we now call Manchuria a certain Aisin Gioro. His descendant, less than three hundred years later, was to sit upon the Dragon Throne as a new conqueror.

The Emperor Hung Wu, had, by necessity, won to power by military means, but the victory once achieved, the soldiers resumed their proper place in subordination to the civil power ; the "literati" were exalted, and re-organization begun on traditional Chinese lines. The Han-lin College, which had been neglected after the death of Kublai was restored. Schools and universities revived. Funds were provided for the maintenance and training of more teachers, for public libraries, and other means of self-education. Economic disorders were remedied by a stern economy of administration, and their victims solaced by the provision of orphanages and hospitals ; whilst the corrupting example of the Mongols was condemned by the destruction of their palaces, and the restraints of sumptuary laws. The bond of political union, stimulated by the great uprising, was streng-



thened by an attempt to codify the law, which partly remedied the defects in the judicial system. The Censorship again resumed its old importance, and for the better information of the Central Government, a Grand Secretariat, the Nei-ko, was established, to receive and examine reports from the Provincial authorities. It lasted till the Revolution of 1911.

But inevitably the old clannishness, parochialism, and particularism still manifest in Chinese society and politics, revived. A countervailing influence, however, is found in the growth and increased importance of the towns. Here the tribe or family, though still maintaining its blood connection, is no longer so localised. A new parochial organization, already suggested by Wang An-shih, known as the po-chia, or hundred, cuts across tribal divisions, and brings together for administrative purposes people of different groups. This intermingling to some extent weakens and modifies the clan spirit. But the town population was—and is—but a small proportion of the whole, perhaps five per cent. then out of a total estimated for the "Middle Kingdom," China Proper, of sixty millions at the end of the Fourteenth Century.

Chinese writers sometimes compare the Ming Renaissance to the European Renaissance of the Fifteenth Century. We cannot put it quite at the level of this or the earlier great European cultural movements, wholesome and inspiring though it was. Whilst the popular conception of the "Unchanging East" is obviously crude and unsatisfactory, there have undoubtedly been certain factors in China standing in the way of substantial and fruitful change.

The Confucian was, on the whole, still contemptuous of inquiry into transcendental problems. He was a Positivist, and, for him, the visible world, and man's material needs, supplied problems sufficient, and indeed more than sufficient, for his attention. Their solution requires a basis of moral and social principles, but these have been adequately posited by the Ancients, and offer little scope for further development, beyond some readjustment or re-interpretation when conditions changed, which they did but little in a fundamentally agricultural society. One may say that this is an ideal state of affairs. The Confucians certainly thought so. It gives the social stability characteristic of Chinese culture. But it is not a condition that produces great thought or great



inspiration. For these mankind must be roused to those soarings towards the transcendental that the Confucians despised.

For this there was, first, Taoism. But Taoism was not able to add anything substantial to that ancient, haunting aspiration. Its scheme was already complete from of old. There was the Tao—the mysterious energising force; there was the mystic union of “ yang ” and “ yin ”; the wished-for harmony of Seen and Unseen, securing the orderly process of the Universe. These things might be hard to attain, but there was nothing else to attain, nothing to do but seek for that blest harmony, within and without. And the method did not challenge action in thought or in deed. At best it could propose a vain alchemy or magic that might induce the universe, and the spirits informing it, to give up their secret, whereon the Sage might relapse to a comfortable passivity.

The other great spiritual influence was Buddhism. Pure Buddhism scarcely lends itself to the bringing together of the things of earth and of heaven for the inspiration of art, and philosophy. But Buddhism in China, with its beliefs in the incarnations of the Divine Spirit, could find in such manifestations as the Goddess of Mercy, in the hierarchy of the Bodhisats, the means of giving expression to art's most transcendental aspirations. Nevertheless, Buddhism was too contemptuous of the visible world to provide a sustained creative energy drawing the human spirit continually to higher realms. Its forms became stereotyped; its matter concerned too much with the more fantastic conceptions of the eternal secret.

Thus, in so far as the art of the Ming period expresses the soul of the people, we find little substantial advance. The improvement—and it is a great and glorious improvement—is in technique. It reached great heights in ceramics and painting. But the inspiration, the ideas, do not seem to give us anything really new. Contemplating the Ming masterpieces in relation to earlier art, we are not struck by that sense of a new bound into the infinite that comes to us in the light of the European revivals.

Hung Wu himself favoured Buddhism, in opposition to Taoism with its charlatan priests. It was in his reign, in 1390, that a real Reformation of its spiritual practices was



carried out in Tibet. Here again we cannot compare the Buddhist Reformation with the European one, with its immense ethical and political consequences. In China the Confucian attitude to religion made such serious reactions impossible. We may consider China fortunate in this respect, but if the cause was some indifference to higher spiritual problems, the price paid may be held too great.

The Reformation associated with the name of its inspirer, Tsong-kapa, was anyhow mainly concerned with matters of doctrine important only to regular followers of the Path. It demanded a strict observance of celibacy, simple dress, and laid emphasis on the importance of the self-culture preached by Gautama. The heads of the new order, the "Popes" of Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhism, are two emanations of the Celestial Buddha, Wisdom and the Divine Healing Spirit, incarnate in the persons of the Pan-shen and Dalai Lamas. The Reforms, however, accentuating the selfish and anti-social features of Buddhism did not find favour with the later rulers or the Confucians. The successor of Hung Wu issued anti-Buddhist edicts. Later on, when the cycle of decay seemed to have recommenced, and disillusion followed the first fine aspirations of the Renaissance, Buddhism and Taoism came into favour again in high places.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CYCLE OF DECAY

THE glory of the Ming hardly survived the reign of their great founder. He had scarcely breathed his last when rebellion raised its head. But this was put down, and the Empire held together, and even extended its boundaries. The efforts of the Tatars to win back the favoured land were repelled, though the reality of their menace was emphasized by the removal, by the Emperor Yung Lo in 1421, of the Capital to Peking. The Great Wall was repaired, canals were extended, granaries built, the exploitation of minerals developed. It was not till the second half of the Fifteenth Century—soon enough!—that the signs of decay became really marked.

It was again a decay from the top, in the Court, with corruption spreading downwards through the Civil Service. That sinister feature of Oriental Courts, the Eunuchs, again made their ill-omened appearance, some being elevated to the position of Councillors, and forming a kind of "Star-Chamber." But even more unpopular, as striking more directly at the practical well-being of the people, was the encouragement given to courtiers and members of the Imperial house to gather unto themselves large landed estates. The Confucians stood boldly opposed to this, and the Censor voiced the popular feeling by declaring it "a flagrant interference with the laws of providence to assign to one man a district which could supply the wants of a hundred families." But though the more extravagant designs of the Ming princes were countered, "landlordism" continued to develop, for the land was the only investment for savings. The Civil Service itself became divided about this time, reflecting the old antagonisms of North and South. The livelier-witted Cantonese, somewhat like the Scotch of our own land, were getting more than their share of posts, and new rules set up three classes, North, Centre, and South, appointments in each being confined to inhabitants of the corresponding regions. It was hardly a measure to make for unity.



The revival of Buddhist, and especially Taoist influences was symptomatic of the growing degeneration. Taoist magicians with their charms and elixirs were everywhere, and Taoist philosophers dangerously emphasized the importance of intuition as opposed to knowledge and discipline. Even the Confucians thought it necessary to comply with the unwholesome demand of public taste by setting up images in the Confucian Halls, and attributing almost divine honours to the Sage. There were sporadic attempts at reform, and occasional purges of the palace. Yung Lo issued edicts against Buddhism, and in 1530 a drastic check was put upon the idolatrous practices of the false Confucians. The images and semi-divine titles were abolished. But decay and corruption went on, reaching steadily downward towards the common people.

The beginning of the Sixteenth Century is signalled by the appearance of a new and portentous factor, and China's restored contact with the West marks the opening of her "modern" epoch, largely concerned with her reactions to that contact.

The first foreigner to re-open relations with China was the Portuguese d'Andrade. He arrived at Canton in 1517, and received permission to trade. There was, then, no policy of exclusion. The practically-minded Chinese, however, contemplating their self-sufficiency, and the superiority, as they believed, of their culture and civilization, were inclined to be a little contemptuous of the value to them of intercourse. This attitude applied more to the proud and conservative Confucian, than to the ordinary trader, artisan and peasant. On the other hand, even the former might be converted to a belief in the value of foreign trade if some of the profits of it came their way.

In those days, indeed, the "barbarians" from the West generally deserved that contemptuous appellation, and did little to convince either officials or people of the benefits of their presence. It is an ugly tale of piracy and ravage on the part of the Portuguese, and retaliation, just though cruel, by the Chinese. D'Andrade himself was executed.

Then the Japanese, awakening to civil war and disorder after a period of acquiescence in the rule of the Ashikaga Shoguns, began to take a hand in the piratical game, defeated



feudal nobles and their followers hoping thus to restore lost fortunes. The Spaniards arrived and occupied the Philippines in 1560. In the same year the Chinese showed a conciliatory spirit by allowing the Portuguese to take a lease, at the moderate annual rent of 1,000 taels (a tael is a weight of about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  oz.) of silver, of the island of Macao near the mouth of the Canton River. The rent was paid till 1849, when in the weak state of the Empire after the disastrous war with England, the Portuguese assumed full sovereignty. But the conciliatory attitude of the Chinese—perhaps interpreted as weakness—did little to tame the ferocious barbarians. Piracies, and even massacres of Chinese continued. It is not surprising that hatred of the foreigner grew, and that the Imperial Court is informed “that the Portuguese have no other design than to come under the name of merchants to spy the country and hereafter to fall on it with fire and sword.”

The tolerance shown to the emissaries of Christianity, in these circumstances, is surprising and creditable to the Chinese. After death had rendered abortive the plans of St. Francis Xavier, little was done till 1581, when the Jesuits began to arrive. They prepared the ground by undertaking the laborious study of the Chinese language, their efforts being regarded with polite amusement by the cultured Confucians. The Jesuit Matteo Ricci was, however, received in high circles in Peking in 1601. His ethical doctrines were listened to with calm approval, if with small interest as apparently containing nothing new; his dogma with a shrug of indifference or discreetly-veiled contempt. But certainly a Chinese Buddhist or even Confucian missionary would not have received as friendly a hearing in those days at the Vatican, at Paris, or Madrid. Moreover the real appreciation shown for the scientific attainment of the visitors witness to the readiness of the Chinese to learn from those who can convince them they have something to teach. Admiration especially was expressed for their astronomical knowledge, and its application for the correction of the Calendar, so important for the ascertainment of the propitious hour, and the due ordering of the seasons. Thus, though the Jesuits, in spite of a characteristic, and indeed praiseworthy, readiness to adapt their doctrines to Chinese ideas, were not able to convince their hosts of the superiority of their ethical and



transcendental teachings, and eventually a serious quarrel arose, the Imperial Observatory at Peking witnessed their activities for many years, and the Treaty of Versailles of the 28th June, 1919, directs the return to China of the Jesuit instruments seized there by Germany in the Boxer operations of 1900.

With the arrival of the Dutch in 1604, and the coming of the English in 1637, the Chinese were first introduced to the rude and hard-headed peoples of Northern Europe. There was no element of religious or political propaganda in their earlier dealings. They came to trade, but were not above forcing their attentions on their prospective customers, as when the first English shots were fired by Captain Weddell in 1637. The Chinese view long remained that the foreigner had little to offer them, beyond a few such articles as clocks and instruments, of interest mainly to the wealthy or scientifically-minded. In any case there was already a sufficiency of foreigners seeking intercourse, and the venal official was not always above receiving encouragement in this view from the judicious Portuguese, concerned for their monopoly.

With the Dutch, however, begins the long and contentious story of opium, whose end is not yet. It was known to the Chinese as a medicine and stimulant at least as far back as the Tenth Century, having perhaps been introduced by the Arabs. The "vice" of smoking seems to have evolved through that other "vice" of tobacco. The latter was imitated from the foreigners early in the Seventeenth Century, and the Ming Emperor, Wan-li, like his contemporary, James I, expressed his objections to the unpleasant habit. But it was the Dutch, who, in their malarious settlements founded in 1634 in Formosa, first introduced the custom of mixing opium with their tobacco as a prophylactic against the deadly disease. The custom spread. Then opium began to be used alone, and the abuse of it amongst the Chinese became serious.

The reign of Wan-li (1573-1620), who was only six years old at his accession, heralds the downfall of the Ming. Economic pressure due to luxury, misrule, and corruption, was throwing continually increasing numbers into the ranks of the discontented, to share with the less reputable of the foreigners the profits of piracy and brigandage. These things,



and famines were beginning to reduce the numbers and productive capacity of the population. In Manchuria the Tatar tribes were coalescing ominously under the forceful policy of Nurhachu of the line of Aisin Gioro. The years 1592 and 1598 witnessed the great Japanese attack on Korea, which had set up a native dynasty, acknowledging the suzerainty of the Ming, just two hundred years before. The Japanese attack, though conducted under the auspices of the great Hideyoshi, failed ignominiously on this occasion, and for nearly three hundred years the invaders withdrew from adventures on the mainland. Their next intervention was to be more momentous.

In China feeling was turning steadily against the dynasty. Most significant was the changing attitude of the Confucians. Some of these even proposed the formation of what we would call a "political party" seeking redress by open political means, instead of by the crude popular fashion of the secret society and rebellion. Real attempts were made for the elimination of eunuchs, corruption, and inefficiency. For the reform of private morals—for the Confucians ever upheld the Master's just views on the intimate connection between the well-being of the State, and the conduct and character of the individual—the "Fu She" movement laid emphasis on practical conduct and knowledge in both ethics and politics. It exhibited a Baconian desire to investigate the true and scientific nature of things, and opposed the tacit compromise with Taoism and Buddhism which had existed from Sung times.

But these things, though certainly of more than academic importance, were inadequate for the practical circumstances of the times. The Chinese had now again to face the stern consequences of corruption and decay. By the middle of the second decade of the Seventeenth Century the great Nurhachu had so consolidated his power in South Manchuria that he could contemplate the expulsion of the Chinese authorities there. The Ming Emperor too late realized the growing danger, and his feeble efforts to spread dissensions amongst the Tatars counted for little against the personality of the aspiring leader, and the alluring prospects his abilities opened up. Some time in 1617 Nurhachu countered the Imperial intrigues by the insulting proclamation of his



Seven Hates against the Ming. The document was burnt in the presence of his army, 40,000 strong, and the ascending smoke conveyed his vengeful purpose to the tribal gods.

In the following year the Manchus began to drive the Chinese forces out of Liaotung.

The Conquest had begun.

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# BOOK III

## THE MANCHUS

- CHAPTER X. THE CONQUEST
- CHAPTER XI. THE MANCHU ORGANIZATION
- CHAPTER XII. THE GREAT MANCHU EMPERORS
- CHAPTER XIII. PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN INTERCOURSE





## CHAPTER X

### THE CONQUEST

MANCHURIA with its area of 380,000 square miles (as big as France and Germany together) stretches in a North and South direction for nearly 1,000 miles, from the Amur River to the Yellow Sea ; its greatest width East and West—about the parallel of  $48^{\circ}$ N.—is over 800 miles, and in the south if we include Jehol, the width is still nearly 700 miles. To the West the plain rises sharply to the Khingan Range ; on the East the rise is more gradual towards the Korean borders whilst further North the low mountains fall again into the basin of the Ussuri, now the Eastern Boundary with the Russian lands stretching down to Vladivostok. The comparatively low-lying central plain—from 1,600 feet to sea-level—forms in the North the basins of the Nonni and Sungari Rivers, in the South of the Liao River and its tributaries. The Nonni flows southward from its source in the Northern Khingan Mountains, being joined continually by tributaries from that range, till it meets, about Lat.  $45^{\circ}$  N., Long.  $125^{\circ}$  E. the Sungari in its Northward course from the border mountains of Korea. The combined waters then flow East and North to join the Amur. The Liao, which flows South into the Gulf of Liaotung, an inland arm of the Yellow Sea, is fed by tributaries from the border highlands of Korea, and from the Southern Khingan by way of the district of Jehol. Its plain, covering the central portion of the present province of Liaoning, is all under 500 feet above sea-level, and has long been occupied by the Chinese, who introduced there their characteristic agriculture and civilization. Beyond, East, and West and North, lay the Tatar lands.

The way into China was easier and better known to these Tatars than to their kindred further West, and they appear there perennially throughout the ages in periods of weakness and disorder. The most important invasions were those of the Khitans about A.D. 936, in the anarchical years before the establishment of the Sung. They set up a regular kingdom



in the North, and boldly declared the ephemeral Chinese "Emperor" a vassal. With the rise of the Sung these Khitans supported their opponents, Tatars and Chinese, but eventually the tables were turned on them, and the Sung conquered the Liaotung Peninsula (where are now Port Arthur and Dairen). Then when the cycle had set in again, and the Sung followed the "inevitable" course of decay, the Tatars became adventurous once more. The new League again conquered North China early in the Twelfth Century, setting up the Kin, or Golden Dynasty, whose fate, at the hands of the Mongols, we have already contemplated.

The Chinese colonists of the Liao Basin were not, however, expelled by the Kin. Their presence was too valuable as agriculturists and artisans. The relations between the two peoples, in spite of continual wars with China Proper, were those of toleration on the part of the ruling race, and acquiescence by the Chinese peasants who continued stolidly to till the land they had made their own in a real if not political sense.

The conquering Mongols brought all Manchuria nominally, and South Manchuria actually, under their sway. Then came the Ming, and the Mongols made their last desperate stand in Liaotung. After they were crushed Chinese colonization there, and in the basin of the Liao, was resumed, though Tatar elements remained, for we hear of Tatar risings in the last quarter of the Fourteenth Century. But on the whole the Liao country was at peace under the Ming, whose chief external troubles were with the Mongols further West. In the rest of Manchuria, in the woody valleys stretching upwards towards Korea, in what is now the Province of Kirin, and in the still wilder country of Heilungkiang to North and West, the Tatars lived out their empty tribal life.

Somewhere about the year 1360, when the great founder of the Ming Dynasty had already begun his victorious career, a child was, as later legend reported, miraculously born of a virgin in a valley some 30 miles East of Mukden, then the headquarters of the Chinese colonial administration. His name was Aisin Gioro. We know nothing more of him, except that his descendants continued to rule in the valley, with, we must suppose, some sense of impending greatness, expressed in the miraculous tradition, and in certain boastful claims made from time to time by the heads of the clan.



Then in 1559 was born in his line the great Nurhachu, from whom the later Manchu rulers claimed to draw their exclusive blood. By persuasion and force he began to weld again the scattered and divided tribes to East and North into a new confederation to be known as the Manchu. The efforts of the Ming Emperor and his representative, the Chinese military governor of Liaotung to support his opponents failed, and by 1618 open war with the Ming had begun.

In 1621 the ill-armed Manchus captured Mukden and Liaoyang, in spite of the cannon and muskets borrowed by the vanquished Chinese from the Portuguese, and the kingdom of Nurhachu, as we may now call it, advanced its borders to the Liao River. Attempts to reach the Great Wall were not successful, but before he died in September 1626, Nurhachu could hand on to his fourth son, Tai-tsong, a powerful State, with its capital at Mukden, whose ruler, holding, so 'twas said, the Jade Seal of Kublai Khan, claimed equality with the Son of Heaven.

Whilst the Chinese civil and military officials in the Liao country had either committed suicide or fled, the ordinary Chinese population again transferred their allegiance to the conquerors. They now adopted to some extent Manchu dress and customs, shaving the head and growing the Tatar "pig-tail," and allowing themselves to be enrolled in military "Banners." Those who did so might come in time to have the same social status as the ruling race, and the way was opened to equality leading to the gradual assimilation of the two races. Much intermarriage between the Manchurian Chinese and the Manchus took place, and the socially ambitious Chinese took on a Manchu air, and even, perhaps, a Manchu name. But they remained inwardly Chinese, and their superior civilization subdued their conquerors. The Manchus, on the other hand, though remaining outwardly Manchu, became more and more Chinese in culture. The process was encouraged by the imperial ambitions of Tai-tsong, who, seeking the inheritance of the Ming, desired to impress the Chinese with his right to it. He caused schools to be set up for the education, on Confucian lines, of a civil service, and required the adaptation of the Chinese writing to the Manchu language. At the same time the realist Tatar continued to develop his military



strength. The young men of the tribes were organized in eight "Banners"; additional "Banners" were formed from outlying Mongol tribes, and from the Chinese volunteers of the Liao districts. Thus was consolidated the instrument by which Tai-tsong's son reaped the final glory promised by the traditions of his fathers.

Meanwhile the degeneration and decline of the Ming continued unchecked by the menace beyond the borders. So far had things gone on the downward course that the brave attempts of the Confucian reformers were but rewarded with persecution. The common people implored in vain the aid of the Taoist priests for the restoration of the lost harmony. The very gods and ancestral spirits seemed helpless. And Buddhism could offer little but a despairing escape from the illusions of a world without hope.

In the midst of the confusion, political and spiritual, the last Ming Emperor, Ts'ung-cheng, ascended the throne in 1627, one year after the death of Nurhachu. With the new reign a sporadic attempt at reform was made, the Eunuchs were dismissed, and the Fu She movement, with its opposition to superstitious Taoism and pessimistic Buddhism, resumed its efforts. But it had little appeal to the people, and its cold, though practical philosophy was contemptuous of "patriotic" appeals. Unmoved by emotional considerations, seeking above all the "ordered State," the stern purists, though at first opposing the Manchus, soon transferred their allegiance.

The way was made easier for them by the judicious policy of Tai-tsong. Within a few months of the accession of Ts'ung-cheng the Tatar forces had broken through the Great Wall, and laid siege to Peking. But the siege was not pressed, the Manchu ruler seeing more profit for his cause in conciliation and negotiation. To emphasize his claims to the Mandate of Heaven, he raised at Mukden the great temples to Earth and Heaven in imitation of those at Peking.

Chinese "Nationalism," meanwhile, put forward a rival champion. This was Li Tse-ch'eng, duly described by his political opponents, Ming or Manchu, as a "robber." As a matter of fact his early career resembled that of the founder of the Ming. Like the great Chu, Li was of peasant stock, and, in the disordered times, proved his capacity for leader-



ship by organizing the brigand bands which were their fruit. The chief difference was that Li's efforts were not crowned with success—for himself—but his actions swayed the balance of fate against the tottering Ming. He first appears prominently in 1629, in Shensi, and his steadily increasing strength there, year after year, is proof of capacity and some solid basis of support. By 1640 his power was extending East and North in the Yellow River country, and in 1642 he was over-running Honan.

The Manchus now began to press in again upon the doomed Ming, but in 1643 Tai-tsong died, and was succeeded by his child son, Shun Chih. The boy was placed under the capable guardianship of his uncle, subsequently known as the Regent Ama Wang, or Father Prince. The event, however, brought a momentary relaxation of Manchu pressure, enabling the Chinese General, Wu San-kwei, to restore and hold the passes of the Great Wall.

In China the robber Li continued his advance. In the autumn of 1643, having proclaimed himself Emperor, he was at the gates of Peking. The despairing Ts'ung-cheng, gathering his family and faithful servants about him explained the ruin of his fortunes. Some committed suicide. Others at his orders were slain by his slaves who then fled. After sounding a gong whose hollow echoes through the empty palace gave back the only reply, the last Emperor of the Ming retired to a favourite spot in the grounds and hanged himself in his own girdle. He was not only the last Ming, but the last native Chinese Emperor, and Chinese nationalism, subdued again by a foreign dynasty was not to revive effectively till our own times.

For the Mandate of Heaven was not destined to fall upon the "robber" Li. Wu San-kwei, still holding the passes of the Great Wall, with his headquarters at Shanhaikwan, had been preparing to send part of his forces to his master's aid, when the news came of the fall of Peking, and the death of Ts'ung-cheng. Wu was in a difficult position. Those about him had all the Confucian contempt for a bandit-peasant. He had to consider too that if he left the passes to turn against Li, the Manchus would certainly come in—as invaders. On the other hand the discreet policy of the Tatars had suggested that if they did seize power in China,



the Confucian system would nevertheless be preserved, as it had been by their predecessor, the great Kublai. One loyalty could at least be retained, and there was after all, no other, now that the Ming was dead.

It is not, of course, certain that Wu envisaged the establishment of another Tatar dynasty, but he decided to appeal to the Manchus to aid in suppressing the "robber," and restoring peace and tranquillity. There could be only one consequence, but before condemning Wu we should remember that his decision did after all give China a dynasty which maintained her in order and prosperity for one hundred and fifty years at a time when new and difficult problems were arising.

The Manchus anyhow accepted the appeal with enthusiasm. Their armies sped to Wu's support and swept the robber away. The Ama Wang promptly proclaimed his nephew Emperor of the Ta Ts'ing, or Great Pure Dynasty. It was the year 1644, and the Dynasty endured till the 12th February, 1912.

Meanwhile the Chinese patriots of the South proposed a last stand. Ephemeral Ming and other princes succeed one another in gallant but vain efforts to repel the conqueror. The Manchus opposed them with their double policy of arms, and amnesty and office for those who submitted. It was an unequal struggle, in spite of occasionally unexpected risings in provinces thought to be subdued, and in Mongolia. In 1651 the end virtually came with the fall of Canton after an eight months' siege. There was still some resistance in Yunnan, where Wu San-kwei was judiciously posted for the double purpose of getting him out of the way and giving him occupation in quelling it; and the piratical raids of the patriot Koshinga, who made his headquarters in Formosa, shed some last rays of glory on Chinese military prowess.

But the rest of the country, and, above all, the Confucians, acquiesced, and, the Regent Ama Wang having died a few weeks after the fall of Canton, Shun Chih, assuming full powers, could set about the organization of a truly imperial realm.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE MANCHU ORGANIZATION

SHUN CHIH, in organizing his realm, was concerned to uphold the Confucian system, for its own sake and to secure the loyalty of the "literati"; to increase the power of, and respect for, the Central authority; and to provide posts of honour and emolument for the Manchu leaders, that their interests might thus be bound to those of the Dynasty, whilst their presence on administrative boards would serve to check any undue concern for native needs.

At the head, of course, was the Emperor, claiming to hold by the Mandate of Heaven, and clothed in the Yellow Robe, embroidered with the five-clawed Dragon, and hung with pearls and necklaces.

The new feature at the court was the Manchu nobility. They comprised the members of the Imperial Clan, distinguished by a yellow girdle, and the eight "iron-capped" princes, descended from the eight "Banner" leaders of the Conquest. Their functions were mainly ceremonial. The head of the family of the First Teacher ranked with the latter, in confirmation of the Confucian alliance, whilst distinguished Chinese were sometimes favoured with noble rank. But these ranks did not in themselves confer actual administrative power.

In administrative matters the Central Power was strengthened by setting up above the Grand Secretariat (Nei-ko) of the Ming, the Grand Council of four, two Manchus and two Chinese, to act as chief advisers of the Emperor with the privilege of approaching his person. It received its final form in 1730. Under it were six Boards: Revenue, Ancient Rites, Civil Service, Punishment, Works, and War. They were manned by the Confucian officials, with a proportion of Manchus, similarly trained, to act as "check and balance." These "Mandarins" (a Portuguese word) wore purple robes, and were distinguished in their classes by bird devices: cock, peacock, pheasant, pelican, stork, and so on; and by the



exquisite designs of the buttons in ruby, coral, sapphire, crystal, jade, etc. Their seals were of jasper, whose confirmatory virtues arose through the phoenix having perched upon the jasper mountain of old legend. Orders and decorations, in varying degrees and classes, were bestowed for specially meritorious service.

The Central Revenue Board had two Presidents, and subordinate departments corresponding to the Provinces. Its business was to receive and distribute the funds required for the Court, the nobles, the Imperial army at Peking, the Manchu garrisons, and the reservists in Manchuria; the Imperial Civil Service; the great central educational establishments like the Han-lin; for certain special emergencies, and redistributions in aid of necessitous Provinces.

Taxes were paid in money or kind, the chief source being a land-tax, partly in the form of a grain-tribute from the rich rice-plains of the Yangtze by way of the Grand Canal to Tientsin and Peking. There were also dues on silk, salt and tea, and mining royalties. The provincial authorities were responsible for collection, the Central Board exercising supervision, and giving the final decision in disputes about assessments, which were frequent until Shun Chih's successor, K'ang Hsi, made a permanent settlement in 1713.

The function of the Central Government remained mainly those of inspection, registration, supervision and regulation of the provincial administrations, with criticism, and, at need, punishment of their officials. The higher appointments, and the bestowal of higher literary degrees were also in its hands. But in cases of emergency, flood, famine or serious disorder, the Central Government became active, appointing an Imperial Commissioner, a Tao-tai, bearing the mandate of the Emperor, and combining civil with police powers, and authority to call for military aid, and thus the reality of the distant and "invisible" majesty could be brought home to all parts of the Empire.

At the same time the ancient institution of the Censors maintained its function of bearing the voice of the people to the Imperial ears. Its task was still difficult, and became more so as the population, which the disorders of the Ming had reduced to about 25 millions, rose steadily under the Manchu peace to 125 millions by 1736.



The Provincial Administrations were controlled by a Civil Governor. He functioned through a number of Boards: finance, education, agriculture, industry, posts, and so forth, mainly concerned, like their prototypes at the Centre, with inspection and control. There were also special salt and grain commissioners. The great Northern frontier province of Chihli, and the Kwang provinces of the South were usually under a Viceroy, a civil official, but with authority over the Manchu troops.

Each Province was divided into a number of Prefectures (Fu), where administrative functions began to acquire a more active aspect. The Prefect was responsible for the maintenance and construction of public works, canals, transport, the welfare of agriculture, and he stood in authority, linking the subordinate districts, and checking their particularism.

These districts were, first, sub-prefectures; and then came the final unit of the official administrative system, the Hsien, corresponding in size to the English county. The head of it, the District Magistrate, expressively designated the "Chih Hsien," or "Knower of the Hsien," was the link between the official hierarchy and the people, in popular language, their "Father and Mother." He had to transform the regulations and directions of his superiors into action. He was responsible for the collection of the grain and land-tax through the heads of the village communities and town parishes; he acted as arbiter in disputes the communities could not settle themselves, and as judge in more serious misdemeanours.

The official hierarchy, then, stopped at the Chih Hsien. From below the organization reached upwards from the individuals and their families, through the ancient tribal communities of the village (hsiang), and the more recent town-parishes or hundreds (po-chia), with their councils of elders and headmen (Hsiang-lao in village, and Ti-pao in hundred). These were the local administrators, responsible for the local collection of the revenue. They were usually aided by a Constable, who acted as the human link with the Chih Hsien, and thus ultimately through the whole range of the hierarchy to the Son of Heaven himself.

This system, though it was to fail in the new circumstances of the Nineteenth Century, was well suited to Chinese conditions in the Eighteenth. No active Central Government



could possibly have functioned in the then state of science and communication. There was a firm basis in the village community, which, apart from some really serious upheavals due to man or nature, could contemplate the disappearance of officialdom without serious concern. But after all such upheavals will come in default of good government, as the Sages taught. There was, and still is, strong need to check extreme particularism.

One check was provided by the Imperial Commissioners. There was also a system of redistributing from the Centre the provincial revenues, so that, in theory, the surpluses of rich provinces would help the poor ones, and so create a sense of unity. This laudable conception, however, did not work well. The rich provinces were tempted to conceal their wealth, the poor to sponge on the Capital, and both usually succumbed to the temptation. Then there was the Censorship, but more "official" than ever, with the way to redress becoming blocked by red tape and corruption, at the best long and weary. It is the inveterate difficulty of all paternal and dictatorial governments.

On the whole, considering their opportunities and temptations, the Chinese bureaucracy was marvellously efficient and conscientious. But salaries were small and families big, posts were few in proportion to aspirants, and there was always a great deal of unemployment amongst the "literati," leading to the creation of unnecessary offices, and consequent waste of labour. Later on, when classical education was proving inadequate for the approaching scientific era, the scope for employment was extended by the institution of technically expert advisers. But always the fundamental family bond stimulated and applauded an inveterate nepotism. There was no proper audit, and a system, quite reasonable in itself, of fees and commissions, lent itself readily to "squeeze" and other abuse. It is not surprising that when corruption set in at the head, it spread rapidly through the lower grades.

Fundamentally the Manchus had introduced little change in the Confucian system, but the new Empire exhibited one new feature to make the Chinese aware of their subjugation, even without the visible symbol of it in the shaven head and Tatar pig-tail now imposed on them.

This was the Manchu military system. At first there were



the Manchu armies of the Conquest, side by side with the native forces of Wu San-kwei, and others who had aided them. As a result of disturbances and rebellions in the reign of Shun Chih's successor, the native armies were disbanded, and henceforward, till 1895, there was no effective standing army except the Imperial Army at Peking, and the Tatar garrisons throughout the country. The former was organized in eight Banners, each of three minor ones, of Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese of Liaotung whose families had joined in the Conquest. Peking itself became, indeed, a huge camp with surrounding Chinese quarters to serve its needs. Military officers were distinguished in their grades by animal badges, ky-lin, lion, tiger, bear, etc. Every enrolled man received a pittance as a reservist, and pay if actually under arms, and every Manchu was potentially a military reservist. The Army, and the garrisons throughout the country, lived an isolated and generally idle garrison life, for inter-marriage and social intercourse with the native Chinese (though not with the Chinese of Manchuria) was prohibited. There was a continued tendency to degeneration and lack of virility in the garrisons, corrected at first by fresh recruits from the Tatar home-lands. Tatar generals of the provincial garrisons had, of course, no civil powers, but neither were they subordinate to the Civil Governors, unless the latter was a Viceroy, appointed in frontier, or habitually disturbed provinces. For temporary occasions the Imperial Commissioner (Tao-tai) had power to employ the garrisons for police purposes. Sometimes his post became of a permanent nature, when he acted as a kind of Police Commissioner in co-operation with the Civil Governor.

For more ordinary police purposes there was the Chinese provincial constabulary (Lu Ying) organized on military lines, but of little military value. There were also, with special police functions, the Chinese Guards of Viceroys and Provincial Governors, the Yellow River Guard, and the Guard of the Imperial Grain Transport along the Grand Canal.

Confucians might still specialize and find employment in military work; but only when a large military effort was required did the Government raise territorial levies of native Chinese, who were consoled for their unpopular conscription



by the flattering appellation of "braves" (yung). They were disbanded after use, for the Manchus could not risk the inculcation of any permanent military or patriotic sentiment.

The system was effective for the subjugation of the Chinese, so long as the Tatars retained their virility. It could not stand against the superior weapons and prowess of the Western world.

Manchuria was never included for administrative purposes in China Proper. It remained under military governors appointed by the Emperors who displayed a special interest for their home-land. At Mukden there was a queer kind of "sleeping" government, bearing the titles and offices of that set up by Tai-tsong before the Conquest. It served to give an air of permanency to the Imperial claims, independent of their maintenance over conquered China. But the desire for permanency is among the vanities, and when all broke in China in 1912, the "shadow government" went too. If a new "national consciousness" be now created in Manchukuo, it will not be a Manchu one, for the Manchu race is dying out.

Inner Mongolia was also divided into military governorships, that part of it now known as Jehol (67,000 square miles) being subsequently subordinated to the Viceroy of Chihli, and generally shown on maps as part of Chihli Province. K'ang Hsi built a hunting lodge among the hills overlooking the site of what is now Jehol City (Chengteh), and a Chinese population began to gather there and elsewhere. But the district remained for the most part wild and uninhabited. In 1930 it contained about three and a half million Chinese and a few nomads.

The social organization of Manchuria, in contrast to that of China, was essentially aristocratic, the Manchu chiefs, and the assimilated Banner Chinese, holding lands on practically a feudal tenure. Generally the Chinese held in E. Liaoning, Mongol Bannermen in W. Liaoning and N. Jehol, whilst the Manchus were chiefly in what is now Kirin. Beyond were the wild, unorganized regions.

These landowners and their families, enrolled in Banners, lived on incomes from lands leased to or worked by non-Banner Chinese labour, augmented by subsidies from China. They were expected to supply recruits to the garrisons,



whilst the wealthier and more intelligent could look to careers in the Chinese Civil Service. These things, and the increase of fixed land-tenure served to counteract the fissiparous tendencies of the Tatars. There was, however, some conflict of interest between the Manchu aristocracy and the Manchu Government in China. The latter were concerned to maintain the distinction between Manchus and Chinese, to prevent the Manchurian people becoming softened by Chinese civilization; the former, requiring labour for their estates, and for opening up the wild northern lands, desired immigration. The Emperors issued edicts forbidding it. These edicts seem to have been evaded, and, though much immigration was only seasonal, even before the edicts were relaxed in 1803 the non-Banner Chinese in permanent settlement are said to have exceeded the Bannermen.

The Manchus, like the Mongols before them, favoured the stern creed of Buddhism. It became, in its Lamaistic form, the State and Court religion. The strict Confucians continued to disapprove, but mainly on social grounds, for the old tacit compromise endured, and the Church did not directly concern itself in politics.

Shun Chih died in 1661. The next two hundred and fifty years is the story of how his successors developed the organization and met the new problems that arose.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GREAT MANCHU EMPERORS

SHUN Chih was followed by three great rulers, K'ang Hsi (1661-1722), Yung Cheng (1722-1735), Ch'ien Lung (1735-1795).

They raised China to a high position, in a century when Europe presented an anarchical spectacle of recurring wars. Yet Europe emerged from her ordeals, on the whole purified, quivering with new ideas, determined to go forward for the uplifting of mankind, and, in spite of backward twists and turns, not without success. But China was to follow up her great century by a hundred years of decay and upheaval, and the end is not yet.

K'ang Hsi was but eight years old when his father died, but the Dynasty was sufficiently established to withstand the weakness of a minority. The elements of stability seemed to be firmly laid, and the "Sacred Edict" of K'ang Hsi, issued in 1670, affirmed anew the virtues of filial piety, the need for education, and the adequacy of the Confucian system. For the rest, Taoism and Buddhism, adapted now to the Chinese scheme, satisfied the superstitious, or, on higher planes, gave scope for transcendental speculation, and inspiration to art. With "yang" and "yin" thus sufficiently harmonized there was little substance behind the renewed sporadic efforts of Chinese nationalism that occurred shortly after K'ang Hsi attained his majority.

These efforts, indeed, were mainly important because they received the support of Wu San-kwei, still relegated to the distant province of Yunnan. Perhaps he repented of his action in bringing in the Manchus; more probably he was discontented with his position and reward. He was encouraged by the perennial troubles in Mongolia, complicated now by the new Russian factor; and by the pirate activities of Ching, the son of Koshinga, in Formosa. Intermittent fighting and insurrections continued for some ten years, but the Manchu power was never seriously challenged. Wu



San-kwei died in 1679, and by 1681 the revolts were ended in China Proper. On the death of Ching next year the Ming supporters in Formosa submitted. The chief result of the struggle was the disbandment of the "native" armies.

The triumph of the Manchus was opportune. An old problem, in new and wider form appropriate to the soaring outlook of the prospective Ruler of all the World, was raising its head. The preposterous title seemed now to have more in it than empty flattery. Was there not indeed a saying amongst the Turki Moslems beyond the borders, "The Chinese would one day conquer the whole world, when there would be an end of it?" The conclusion doubtless indicated the only condition on which the ultimate Harmony of the Tao could be achieved.

The problem, anyhow, of the Outlying Lands, was insistent, for far away, another Ruler and People, also with Cæsarian traditions of World Conquest and Unity were making their presence felt. Russia was reaching out in her long march across Siberia, which Yermak had entered in 1580, when the Ming were hurrying to their final eclipse. By about 1650, just before Shun Chih took over the reins of power, Khabarov had reached the banks of the Amur, and in the following year there was fighting with the Manchu troops on the Ussuri and the Sungari. Relations continued strained, and added to the difficulties of the Manchus in the Chinese insurrections. On their suppression the Manchu forces in the north were reinforced. The Cossack settlement of Albazin suffered a six years' seige (1682-88). In the following year an enduring settlement was arranged.

By the Treaty of Nerchinsk the Son of Heaven admitted in the line of the Amur and Argun rivers a limitation to his far-reaching claims, and the boundaries are recognized to this day.

The matter did not, however, end there, for the Russians raised another question, destined to loom large in the debates between China and the Western Powers from the end of the Eighteenth Century. The "Ruler of the World," whilst he might recognise the existence of other, though barbarian, peoples, would not admit equality of status for official intercourse and the mutual exchange of ambassadors. But the inevitable difficulties of neighbours soon arose, for frontiers



were wild, traders across them necessarily adventurous, and apt to find recreation and profit in brigandage and robbery. Besides, an attitude of intrinsic superiority is obviously inimical to the ordinary amenities of intercourse.

In 1719, accordingly, Peter the Great despatched a mission under Ismaloff, his Captain of the Guards, with a request to be received as Ambassador-Extraordinary. The moment was not happy, for there was now growing up that resentment against foreigners in general which looms so large in the story of the next two hundred years. Eventually, however, by an agreement of 1721, permission was given for a Russian diplomatic mission to reside at Peking, but the concession was not to imply any acknowledgment of equality. The mission had not diplomatic immunities, privileges, or rights of audience, though its members were, so to speak, guests, and entitled to appropriate courtesies.

The Russians were willing to accept this inferior status, and the fruits duly appeared in another Treaty, of Kiachta, signed on the 21st October, 1727. Under it frontier marts were established, and "extra-territorial" arrangements made whereby robbers and "frontier-breakers" were to be handed over to judgment in their own country. Russia was also to be allowed to send priests and students to Peking. Six years later the Chinese sent a mission of intercourse to Russia. Troubles continued from time to time over such sordid matters as commercial disputes, brigands and frontier-breaking, but the intercourse established sufficed to prevent any serious developments. The problem of equal status was postponed for later settlement by Powers less complaisant than the Russians.

If, however, the Son of Heaven could renounce the dreary Siberian steppes, as fit dwelling-places for a barbarian race, he was more interested in the wide lands of his Tatar kin, stretching west to the Altai.

In Mongolia proper, after the vast Empire of Jenghiz had vanished, leaving the ruins of Baghdad and the great canals of 'Iraq among the witnesses to its devastating progress, the inhabitants had reverted to the old tribal anarchy. Some of the eastern tribes on the borders of Manchuria had, indeed, acknowledged the Imperial sway of Tai-tsong, but during the operations preceding the Treaty of Nerchinsk, the Khalka,



west of the Argun, had listened to the flattery and promises of the Russians. In 1688 a struggle broke out between the confederation of the Khalka and a rival Kalmuck League of the Eleuth, headed by a certain Galdan, who confessed to the imperial ambitions of Jenghiz. But there was now a Ruler in China, and immediately after the settlement of Nerchinsk, K'ang Hsi took in hand the Central Asian question.

His envoys, insulted by Galdan, were followed by three armies, in which Chinese "braves" fought willingly with the regular Manchu forces, against the old Tatar enemies. The struggle, with many vicissitudes, spread into Tibet and E. Turkestan. By 1720 the Chinese had re-established themselves in the former country, setting up a characteristic administration of control and inspection above the local government of the Dalai Lama and his ecclesiastical chiefs. This made easier the way into Turkestan, where rival Moslem religious chiefs, the "khojas," fought insistently amongst themselves. But on the death of K'ang Hsi in December 1722, both Mongolia and E. Turkestan still retained their anarchical independence.

Yung Cheng (1722-35), under the influence of an anti-expansionist party arisen amongst the Confucians, abandoned further operations in 1728, but the experience gained prepared the way for the final subjugation at the hands of Ch'ien Lung, whose military feats exhibit the efficacy of Manchu prowess in alliance with Confucian organizing powers.

This great Emperor ruled from 1735 to 1795, when, his reign having achieved the mystic Chinese cycle of sixty years, he abdicated. He gave little attention to the Central Asian question for the first twenty years, being content to support the Tatar chief Amursana who had acquired some prominence amongst the warring Tatar leagues. In 1755, however, Amursana having been overthrown, Ch'ien Lung, in spite of continued opposition from the anti-expansionist party, decided on more active intervention. Amursana was restored, but displayed at once an ungrateful ambition for independence and empire. Contingents of the Chinese allies were massacred, and Ch'ien Lung despatched a great army. The Turks and Tatars made a brave resistance, but by 1757 Kashgar and Yarkand were occupied, and the victorious Chinese arms were carried beyond the Tien Shan to Khokand in Ferghana.



A great slaughter took place, and the empty spaces were re-peopled by colonists from E. Mongolia, and China itself, who thus got rid of undesirable and criminal elements in her population. The policy was drastic, its justification the comparative peace enjoyed by Central Asia for the brief space of seventy years. An immediate and unhappy reaction, however, was a terrible Muhammadan rising in Kansu. The recurrent discord seemed to demand the removal of this dangerous cancer disturbing the harmony of the Celestial Realm, but the Emperor's orders for the extermination of the Moslems were not carried out, and the community remains, still, unfortunately, a disruptive element.

The Imperialist policy was extended by the invasion in 1768 of Burma, which acknowledged the lordship of the Son of Heaven. At the end of the reign there was a remarkable complication with Nepal, which was proposing the conquest of Tibet. The Chinese armies performed the astonishing feat of crossing the Himalayas and occupying the Nepalese capital of Khatmandu in 1792, the Imperialist ambitions of whose rulers were thus severely checked.

The period was great, as men judged things in those days. There was anyhow internal peace, and greater security beyond the frontiers. The standard of living was rising, and in the towns especially a wealthy class was appearing, creating a wider demand for objects of art and luxury.

The life of the peasant remained much what it had always been, and his home was little more than a hovel, but the houses of the rich were extensive and airy, and exhibited a pleasing architecture of curving eaves and carved exteriors. Gardens were laid out to combine all the possibilities of nature and artifice, employed on plants and trees, water, bridges, rocks and caves, in most perfect harmony of taste and beauty.

Interiors displayed the exquisite conceptions of ceramics and painting; richly embroidered silk hangings; carved blackwood and lacquer furniture; and decorative texts to please the eye, and the mind by the recollection of a familiar context.

A large seafaring population existed, whose junks and sampans (sometimes incredibly overcrowded) formed their homes and means of livelihood.



The well-to-do went clothed in dignified silk robes, the scholar with his long nail-cases, exhibiting his pride and contempt for manual labour. Women wore silk trousers, with embroidered tunics, whilst imitation flowers and jewelled ornaments set off the black coils of their hair, and the unhappily distorted feet were encased in delicately decorated shoes.

The staple food was still rice, shovelled by skilfully wielded chopsticks (exquisite personal treasures with the rich) from dainty bowls. Pork and eggs (fresh or dried) remained always important elements of diet, and there was an enormous supply of fish, ducks, geese, and game-birds. Cormorants were employed to catch the former. The familiar ginger was a favourite condiment. Evidences of growing luxury were less-easily won delicacies such as shark's fin, the delicious birds'-nest soup, and *bêche-de-mer* or trepang (sea-slugs).

Culture was not neglected.

There was much vigour of research and commentary at the Han-lin, and some attempts to put new life into the old teachings. Great libraries were gathered together, and Ch'ien Lung himself wielded a prolific pen, or rather brush. There was a move away from the rigid formalism of the Classics, to the more human analysis of the novel, now, as in the West, beginning to make its appearance. The drama, too, came to deal with more natural, homely subjects, exhibiting often scope for humour, welcome, though usually crude, if not coarse. The old spectacular plays, however, still won popular applause. The fresh appeal of these things is evidenced by the growth of literary societies, and a great output of poetry, to take part in which was almost a necessary qualification for membership.

The following is from the charming translations by Charles Budd :

A fisherman goes adrift in his boat. The current bears him through an underground channel to where

“ . . . the thickset peach-tree groves with red-veined flowers  
Hid the cooling waters flowing in and out the shady bowers.”

There he finds a quiet rustic folk, sweet, simple, courteous and hospitable as of yore. They inquire about

" . . . the things and men  
In the world of sin and sorrow far beyond their quiet life's ken."

He leaves, and later tries in vain to find that valley again,

" But when the sand of life through its course had nearly run,  
He thought he saw the way lay to it beyond the westering sun."

It is a somewhat trite expression of that ancient, rather futile hope for the restoration of the Golden Age.

There were of course less estimable activities, and the moralists declaim against gambling and vice, and the increased facilities for them.

In art, ceramics and painting, there were great technical advances in respect of colour and decoration, but towards the end of the period there were signs of exhaustion of idea, and consequent over-elaboration and degeneration.

The judgment becomes applicable to all aspects of Chinese culture. It appeared, in spite of the new developments, to have nothing really fresh to offer, to be barren, and consequently dead. There was need for a stimulus from outside, to remedy that old misfortune of the Moslem barrier, that had cut off the fruitful intercourse with Europe. For good or for evil it was to be renewed. The reactions were discordant and cataclysmic, but in the ceaseless working of the Great Tao, the ultimate compromise will surely work itself out to a higher harmony.





## CHAPTER XIII

### PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN INTERCOURSE

THERE were three aspects, spiritual, political and economic, to the problems arising from China's new contacts with Europe, and they were all interwoven.

China's initial mistake was in holding them all of quite trivial importance to her.

It did not, indeed, seem surprising to the Chinese that inferior and barbarian peoples should come to learn the habits of civilized life, the cult of the beautiful in literature and art, and the Way of Harmony, in the land of the Sages. It was not surprising either that foreigners should find in the Flowery Land material things that the less fortunate outer world had hitherto scarcely known, the marvellous work of the patient craftsman, the tea, the silk—not unknown, but the luxury of the few. But apart from some skill in constructing instruments for measuring time, and fixing the seasons, they had little to offer in exchange. As for their ethical and metaphysical teachings, it was right to examine them and listen to them, and so long as they advocated virtue, they should be tolerated, and given at least the same privileges as that other foreign teaching, Lamaism, on the same condition of non-interference in politics. An edict in 1692 announced these tolerant principles.

But the Sages took the old contemptuous view that the teaching had nothing fundamentally new. The Chinese were not unfamiliar with the conception of a Divine Ruler in Heaven. The Buddhists had taught the incarnation of His Spirit in a Divine Son, and the Divine Virgin with her attribute of merciful intervention was already the most popular of deities. The numerous saints of Roman Catholicism seemed to differ little from the gods, spirits, and ancestral heroes of the Chinese pantheon. The teaching was "not bad," but on the other hand, the practice, judging by most of the "barbarians" one met, was not very good, doubtless



because so little reverence was shown for the family bond, filial piety, and the tradition of the ancestors.

When we recall the attitude of the European missionary, then, and for long after, regarding the Chinese as pagan, heathen, and inferior in all respects ; and their own doctrines—expressed in difficult, and, to the Chinese, often unpalatable, dogma—as containing the whole and only truths, which it was a sin, a blasphemy and an impertinence to question, it is not surprising that conflict arose. As Yung Cheng pertinently remarked to the Jesuits : “ . . . you tell me that your law is not a false one, and I believe you . . . If I thought it was false, what would prevent me destroying you ? Yet if I were to send a troop of lamas to Europe to ask people there to change their customs, how would you receive them ? ” The question was discreetly left unanswered.

Yet a superior culture has the right, and indeed the duty, to impress itself upon an inferior one. But it had best mingle its admonitions with a due humbleness and sense of human fallibility, and understanding of and sympathy for the truths of others. Apart from the Jesuits, whose concessions to Chinese sentiment were however rejected by the higher authorities at Rome, the Christian missions generally, both Roman Catholic and the Protestant which came later, failed in these respects.

Tolerant contempt was doubtless adequate to meet their attitude in matters of culture. But it was another thing when the intruders actually began to step into positions of place and power, at Court, and in the services. The Manchu Emperors, in fact, as foreigners themselves, were not averse to favouring foreign elements to check and balance the overmastering Confucians. We may suspect such a political motive behind the rather exaggerated compliments paid by K'ang Hsi to his European servants : “ . . . you have always served me with zeal and affection . . . without the slightest cause for reproach. Many Chinese distrust you . . . but I am so convinced of your uprightness and good faith that I publicly declare you deserving of every trust . . . ” The Confucians, concerned for posts already too few for their swollen numbers, became definitely antagonistic. They began to suggest an intimate connection between the actions of troublesome and piratical traders, and the gentler ex-



ponents of the Gospel. Stories of happenings in other lands came to support their views and alarm the Emperor. The inveterate tale of the connection between the missionary and foreign imperialistic designs began to take on substance. As the Confucian, Lan Ting-yuan, about 1732, observed: ". . . where the Roman Catholic Religion is practised the Westerners appropriate the place for their own." For what other purpose, it was asked, did these traders spend money on religion. The over-reaching claims of the Pope lent point to Confucian complaints, emphasized by the famous dispute over the Chinese rendering of the word "God."

The Jesuits proposed words meaning Heaven (T'ien) and Supreme Ruler (Shang Ti), congenial to Confucian and Taoist thought, as suggesting the Being set up by the Tao. The more orthodox Dominicans, concerned for the conception of God as First Cause, proposed Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu). The Emperor, who supported the former view, was naturally incensed when the Pope decided for the latter, and turned now a ready ear to those who suggested that this humiliation was a foretaste of coming temporal subjugation. The Pope's decision in 1715 against tactful Jesuit concessions respecting rites rendered to Confucius gave another weapon to the opposition.

In 1724 Yung Cheng prohibited teaching and confiscated property. Actual persecutions occurred in the reign of Ch'ien Lung, the very practice of Christianity was forbidden, and a few missionaries were executed. But some relaxations were made later, which, with the evasions of the law characteristically connived in by the officials, enabled Christianity to survive, though no longer as a factor likely seriously to disturb the harmony of the land, or complicate the purely political and economic problems.

With the establishment of the strong Manchu power the Central Government had sought to end the vagaries of the foreign merchants. In 1702 K'ang Hsi appointed an Emperor's Merchant, the Hoppo, for the general control of foreign trade. He was to receive a certain commission on the proceeds transmitted to Peking, and, for the rest, would best justify his appointment by raising no troubles for the central authorities. Nevertheless, apart from "sordid" trade disputes, questions of "status" inevitably arose. The



Government thought to simplify matters by restricting all overseas trade to Canton, and this, decreed in 1757, remained, officially, the situation until the Treaty of Nanking in 1842.

The foreigners had to submit to many indignities and restrictions. By the Canton trade regulations they were severely hampered in their movements and not allowed out at night. They were forbidden to have arms in their "factories" or warehouses, and might not have their women-folk with them. Doubtless some of these rules were for the safety, and in the interest, of the foreigners themselves, become feared and unpopular through the misdemeanours of earlier adventurers, but their position was obviously unsatisfactory, and their inferiority of status accentuated by the refusal of the officials to have any direct intercourse with them for the redress of grievances or other purposes. Questions of status and official intercourse were, in fact, really at the root of the subsequent troubles and their grave consequences.

At the same time the foreigners were subject to Chinese law. This was right and proper in theory, for foreigners go to another country at their own risk. But civilized nations have always held, and, if strong enough, have insisted, that laws should be administered in accordance with certain accepted principles of justice and humanity. It cannot be said that these principles obtained in China.

That punishments were severe and barbarous could perhaps hardly be a matter of complaint from a nation that still hanged children for petty theft, provided the crime was a crime, duly proved to have been committed. But there was no certainty that a Chinese Court would take evidence fairly, and judge justly upon it. Moreover Chinese justice would not distinguish between accident and intention, and a life had to be paid for a life even in a case of self-defence. We may recognize a praiseworthy concern for the value of human life thus requited, but many actual cases are recorded where a fatal accident required the death of the unfortunate cause of it, where our laws would have demanded, at most, punishment for manslaughter, and sometimes not even that.

The foreigners complained too, that, though subject to such severities, they received no proper protection from the administration that imposed them; that, on the contrary,



the officials were chiefly concerned to exploit and oppress them, openly or corruptly, by insistence on dues and presents. It is, however, pleasant to record a contrasting example of humanity and good-will when, a trading ship having been wrecked in 1731, the officials, in the name of the Emperor, and with considerable ceremony, presented a sum of money to each of the forty-seven survivors.

In civil cases, disputes over contracts and payments, there was more scope for corruption, and grave uncertainties, common for both Chinese and foreigners. The former, indeed, had long evolved a system of avoiding resort to magistrates, and settling such matters through their guilds, and it speaks well for the general honesty of the Chinese merchants, that the foreigners could get adequate satisfaction in this way, so that trade continued.

About the year 1720, however, the various trade guilds dealing with the foreigners at Canton combined to form a monopoly, the "Hong." There were some good points about this centralization, as it enabled a considerable simplification of procedure both for trade and for disputes. But it put the Chinese merchants in a strong bargaining position. In 1760, after the restriction of trade to Canton, the Hong received official recognition as the only body authorized to trade with the foreigner, and every foreign merchant was required to have a Hong merchant, through whom alone he could transact business, and who was to be security to the authorities for the good behaviour of his foreign clients. And these rules gave further opportunity for corruption and "squeeze" for their evasion.

An opposing monopoly, then, became a necessary weapon for the foreigners, not only for trade bargaining, but to give substance to a threat to break off trade relations when grievances became intolerable. By the middle of the Eighteenth Century this had become, broadly speaking, practicable, since the vast bulk of the trade, with the pregnant, though temporary exception of opium, was not only in English hands, but, since 1699, entirely under the control of the East India Company, without whose licence no English ship or merchant could legally trade in the China Seas. The threat to stop trade was indeed employed more than once, and that it served to secure redress is eloquent of the value of the intercourse



to Chinese merchants and officials alike. The point needs stressing to combat the superficial view that English traders forced themselves upon the unwilling Chinese. Even an East India Company could hardly have forced unwelcome attentions on the powerful Chinese Empire of the Eighteenth Century, and trade could not have continued for a hundred and fifty years, without the actual use of force by the English, if there had not been mutual advantages. As late as 1831, three years before the monopoly ended, the Company used the threat to break off relations. They protested that they came to China only to trade, and desired friendship with the Chinese, but their factory had been attacked, their property destroyed, their Chinese servants ill-treated. The threat sufficed again, but an effective threat to break off trade is hardly evidence of use of force to secure it!

The economic aspect of these trade relations raised another problem on which it is not so easy to give a judgment. The difficulty was this. As the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, "swaying the wide world," and welcoming "the respectful humility" of King George III, said, "we possess all things," and therefore his people had no use for foreign goods. There was some substance in the boast. In England, anyhow, there had been many complaints that the trade was too one-sided. China provided the staples of tea and silk, and the market for them was extending, but the Chinese were not taking English goods. Attempts to push wool were not successful. There was a potential market in the cold north, but it was far away from Canton, the only port of entry. In effect the trade was only balanced by goods from India, and the import of silver. To the latter there was limit, and, for trade to go on, it was essential to find something the Chinese wanted.

This, unfortunately, proved to be the controversial opium. The Chinese Government had decided that opium-smoking was a vice. In 1729 Yung Cheng issued the first prohibition edict, placing severe penalties on the sale of opium, and the opening of smoking-divans. There was evasion, connived in by officials, who took the lenient view that the edict applied only to the native, and not to the foreign product! Incidentally the imported article, from India and Persia, was of better quality than the native, whilst increased importation gave wider opportunities for fees and commissions. The



trade, however, till about 1773, was mainly in the hands of the Portuguese at Macao. Instructions issued by the East India Company in 1733 stringently forbade the carriage of opium from India in their ships. After 1773 private merchants trading under licence from the Company began to supply the article, and about 1781, the Company, moved by the necessity of restoring the balance of trade, began to deal in the article itself. Import, however, does not seem to have been very large at this period, and some portion at least was used for legitimate medicinal purposes. But that there must have been a distinct increase is shown by the renewed concern of the Government. In 1780, a new Viceroy, an enthusiastic Prohibitionist, issued orders for restriction. But the desire of the Chinese for the drug, the disloyalty of officials and others who made their profit from the traffic, produced a situation similar to that in the United States in our own time. The trade went on, and in 1796, at the beginning of a new reign, a fresh Imperial Edict imposed yet heavier penalties on smoking.

Such were the problems. Bound together as they were they centred round the whole question of "status." The foreigners claimed that with a proper recognition of equality, culminating in mutual representation at the respective courts, they could be solved to the satisfaction of all. The Chinese were unwilling to concede such equality. They held their civilization superior, and any contrary suggestion impertinent. To the Emperor it was inconceivable that any other ruler could presume to be on a level with the Son of Heaven. Such was his attitude to the first British Embassy, of Lord Macartney, in 1793. Its object was to insist on equality of status.

Ch'ien Lung himself exhibited a geniality worthy of his greatness, but the Confucian officials and the Manchu nobles could brook no derogation of the Imperial claim. The ceremony of the "kow-tow," requiring nine prostrations with forehead touching the ground, was insisted on. Lord Macartney refused, so the mission failed and the problems it was intended to solve were left for a new era that followed the abdication of the last great Manchu Emperor.

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## BOOK IV

### EAST AND WEST

- |         |        |                              |
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## CHAPTER XIV

### CONFLICT

A MATHEMATICAL master, wishing to lighten the dragging hours assigned to the study of Newtonian (and other) principles, will suggest the problem of the irresistible force meeting the immovable mass. It was one achieving reality in the relations of the two halves of the civilized world, for East and West were meeting in earnest.

The difficulties of mutual understanding were great. There was the formidable barrier of language, surmountable for ordinary business purposes, but not for the deeper needs of cultural sympathy. And failure here reacted on trade, emphasizing how inability to appreciate the mind and outlook of a foreign customer is "bad for business." If then "business men" complain, as they did, of interference by governments and politicians, they should realize that the latter deal with just those problems arising from differences of culture and outlook, which, unless settled, make any mutually prosperous intercourse impossible. The political problem, in fact, then as now, overshadowed the economic one, for trade alone, even when of mutual material benefit, is no adequate bond for international relations.

A fresh stage on the way to understanding began in 1807, when the first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison, arrived at Canton. He was not allowed to preach, but he set about the practical spade-work nobly, compiling a Chinese dictionary, and translating the Bible. The Protestant missionaries generally were not so open to the old accusation of political motive as the earlier Roman Catholic ones had been. But Chinese suspicions of it remained, and events unhappily gave some grounds to them. A certain narrowness of outlook, too, militated against any wide success, and though, on the balance, there has been great gain to all, for some years Protestant missionaries were a disturbing rather than a harmonising factor. Roman Catholic missionaries, too, were not always able to escape ill-treatment. In 1930 there were



in all his enterprizes." These "pirate" leaders must be looked upon as members of an "opposition," denied adequate "constitutional" means for redress, and adopting "extreme" courses. They were in fact so regarded by the Government, which, characteristically, was always ready for a reconciliation, and former pirate chiefs and brigands might find peace and prosperity in long-hoped-for official positions! For the rank and file, however, a harsher treatment was usually reserved. They would be executed in batches, being mostly surplus "scum," with few concerned for their fate.

The pirate activities naturally added to the causes of dispute with the foreigners. The latter demanded protection, and resentment at failure to give it was increased by well-founded suspicions of connivance between officials and pirate chiefs. Eventually excesses became so serious that the Canton merchant guilds, faced with the prospect of a complete cessation of trade, induced the officials to seek the aid of the British. It was a curious transaction, the officials, honest and dishonest alike, being probably glad to be rid of an unpleasant task. A vessel, the *Mercury*, was fitted out by British and Chinese merchants, and certainly taught the pirates a lesson. But piracy went on, though its importance was overshadowed by the growth of other complications.

Eighteenth Century Europe, groping through the "Age of Reason" to the great upheaval of the French Revolution, was sufficiently occupied with its own problems, but with the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, and the consummation of the Industrial Revolution, the economic one had become insistent. England especially had greatly increased capacity to produce, a rising number of unemployed, a crying need for fresh markets. The China trade came to be regarded more and more as a source of employment at home, than of securing wealth from abroad. But exports of English goods to China were still small, and American competition was becoming serious. The tea and silk were being paid for chiefly by opium from India. Its import had been made definitely illegal in 1800, and the E. I. Co. had then, officially, given up the traffic, but the trade was still carried on in what were called "country ships," not belonging to the Company, but licensed by it and under its control. A good deal was also in the hands of the Portuguese at Macao, and the Company



was impelled, in 1816, to make an angry protest on the general injury to trade caused by it. But the traffic went on, connived at by corrupt officials, including former pirate chiefs turned officers of the "preventive" service! As a caustic report of 1815 indicates, such knew the ropes, and were adept both at seizure and exacting "squeeze" for countenancing evasion.

By the second decade of the Nineteenth Century, import had grown enough to turn the balance of trade against China, and silver, received in the Eighteenth, began to flow out again. But this was small consolation to English unemployed. It was complained, with justice, that the natives' drug purchases diminished their consuming power of the morally and materially superior British goods, and their own productive capacity. The moral argument thus became interwoven with the economic one. This, unfortunately, militated against a proper sense of proportion. Hence the misleading phrase "Opium War," and still prevalent ideas that the chief purpose of the trade was to force opium upon the Chinese. Certainly it was still difficult to find "China's need," but opium could not have been forced on those who did not want it. When total Prohibition was decreed in 1800 there were indeed too many vested interests in China itself for it to be effective, with corrupt officials and the whole intricate gang system bred by laws that people will not obey.

A memorial from the Canton authorities to Peking frankly accuses the corrupt connivance of officials with "designing foreigners," and the difficulties were fully recognized by the councillors of the Central Government. These divided into two schools. One desired legalization and regulation. But the other, the purists, were sternly against any compromise. Their view carried the day and brought matters to a crisis.

The way was unwittingly being prepared in England. Blame for the conditions of the China Trade was laid upon the E. I. Co. monopoly. "Laissez-faire" was to the fore, and regulation and restriction out of favour. Possibilities for a trade in Manchester goods acquired reality about 1827, and gave point to moral arguments by offering a better alternative to opium. Public opinion was becoming more effective, and the Company, being a monopoly, had few friends.



It had still, indeed, strong arguments on its side. The monopoly was considerably modified by the licence-system; and the restricted nature of Chinese trade, precluding great hopes of expansion, was emphasized. Further, if monopoly and control, the only "effective weapon," were to go, some form of Commercial Treaty would be necessary. This would raise the whole political question of status, and it were best to settle that first.

The opposition, however, carried the day. In 1833 the monopoly was abolished by Act of Parliament, though the need for regulation was so far recognized that Superintendents of Trade were to be set up at Canton, with courts to deal with offences committed by British subjects in the China Seas.

The more intangible question of status was not so easily dismissed.

An attempt to settle it by Lord Amherst, in 1816, had been as unsuccessful as that of Lord Macartney. Now, in 1834, another effort was made.

The Chinese were certainly not unwilling to trade, but the Imperial Government was genuinely concerned about the opium traffic, on moral and economic grounds, and thus the ill-omened drug supplied the anti-foreign party at Peking with the weapon that swayed the balance to their side.

Lord Napier was explicitly instructed that the British Government desired conciliatory measures, with no force or violence, and the mercantile community generally held the same view. Lord Napier, however, was no more successful than his predecessors. There were the usual misunderstandings, the usual mutual accusations of arrogance.

The situation became worse. The Chinese authorities ignored the Superintendents set up by the British Act of 1833, and regulations were tightened up. The monopoly of the Hong was made more rigid, and orders given for the strict application of the anti-opium edicts. But enforcement proved impracticable, and the traffic went on, with much tension and friction all round. The conciliatory policy of the Superintendent, Elliott, met with disfavour from traders who desired a more forceful policy. At Peking the Prohibitionists and anti-foreign party waxed more vocal.

At last the stern purist Lin was appointed Imperial Commissioner to inquire into the opium traffic. Elliott expressed



his anxiety to see the traffic stopped. But Lin had all the "Die-Hard's" dislike of "foreigners," and desired their expulsion as much as, or more than, the stopping of the traffic. Certain stores of opium were duly surrendered, but point was given to the views of those who opposed Elliott's conciliatory policy by fresh demands for the punishment of the merchants. Fuel was added to the flames by rioting and bloodshed at one of the illicit depôts on the barren island of Hongkong, and the usual demand of a life for a life. Then came piracy on Canton River, probably by opium smugglers, the arrival of British men-of-war, and shots on the 3rd November, 1839.

Lin ordered the expulsion of all foreigners.

The British Government, whilst ready to accept the challenge, was prepared to justify its position, and Lord Palmerston's Despatch of the 20th February, 1840, pointed out that, whilst a Government had a right to enforce its laws, it should treat natives and foreigners alike; and further that, if a law had been ineffective for years, it was not just, suddenly, without warning, to enforce it with severity.

The rights and wrongs need not be laboured. A larger issue was at stake. A country has, of course, a right, though not always the power, to regulate its intercourse with other countries, but a willingness for intercourse combined with a fundamental assumption of superiority, is hardly in accordance with the principles of Peaceful Harmony and Celestial Reason.

The Peking Government, with the arrival of the British expedition had to face the realities of the situation. Lin was speedily recalled and disgraced. But the fighting went on. Forts on the Canton River were seized, and Hongkong occupied in January, 1841. Negotiations for peace broke down, and in May Canton was captured. But the Emperor refused to confirm the peace proposals. The British advanced to the mouth of the Yangtze, and on up the great river. On the 29th August, 1842, was signed the Treaty of Nanking. It marked the first defeat of China by a Western Power, and the beginning of a new era.

By it and the supplementary arrangements the ports of Canton, Amoy, Fuchow, Ningpo and Shanghai were to be opened. Consuls with power to superintend trade were to be appointed, and merchants were to have the right of



residence. Hongkong was ceded as a place of security for traders. The Chinese had to pay an indemnity for the operations, and the opium seized by Lin. A pledge was given for equal status in official intercourse. The Hong monopoly was to be abolished. A tariff was to be arranged (subsequently fixed at about five per cent.) and trade regulations drawn up. These came to include the usual extra-territorial arrangements for the trial of British criminals by the British consul in his own court. The U.S.A., France, and other countries swiftly secured similar privileges. Christianity was to be tolerated.

The Treaty was humiliating for the Chinese, and struck a severe blow at the prestige of a Dynasty incapable of withstanding barbarian pretensions. The people were angry and resentful, and anti-foreign feeling increased. The turbulent Cantonese refused to open their city, and Tao Kuang, pathetically interpreting their unanimity as evidence of the Will of Heaven, would not employ force on them. There were difficulties about the tariff. There was no proper administrative machinery, and uniformity could not be secured from different provincial governments, whilst the matter was held to be no concern of the Centre. There was trouble, too, with missionaries, and the behaviour of foreigners generally was not tactful, and soon the country was seething with injured pride, and some justifiable resentment.

The harmony of "yang" and "yin" had indeed been fatally disturbed, and the portentous discords must have sounded harshly in the ears of the sad Emperor as he left the earthly scene for the company of his ancestors in March, 1850.

A degenerate son was to succeed him, but if death had extended the Monarch's vision, he might have derived some comfort from contemplation of that son's future Imperial Consort, Yehonala, a girl then only 17, but in whose veins ran the last virile drops of the blood of Nurhachu.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE T'AI-P'ING REBELLION

HSIEN FENG, the Seventh Emperor of the Manchu line, was ill-fitted to cope with the gathering storm. He was weak of will and body, a libertine and a drunkard, and if the vigorous qualities of the young Yehonala, who became one of his consorts in 1852, presented a wholesome contrast, her influence must, nevertheless, be judged unfortunate, for almost to the end she stood stiffly by the ultra-conservative, exclusive, chauvinist elements, that refused either concessions to the foreigners, or redress for their own people. These now formed a definite party at court, in opposition to the more liberal who hoped for a reasonable settlement of foreign relations, and had been in favour with Tao Kuang after the disasters of 1842.

That Emperor's death was the signal for a change. The liberal ministers were dismissed, and replaced by representatives of the stern unbending isolationist school. This was followed by an ominous revival of anti-foreign agitation, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ancient device of distracting attention from failure at home by blaming "the foreigner" was being employed by the weakening dynasty.

One—for China—novel circumstance helped to stimulate the agitation. There had long been a certain overflowing of the land frontiers North and East, and Chinese had gone to Formosa and the Philippines. But a new movement, appealing especially to the adventurous elements of the Kwang Provinces gave opportunity for going to distant America—to San Francisco, and the Californian goldfields; to the Australian goldfields; to the Indies. Many came home again with no very good account either of their treatment or the morals of the white "barbarians" in the more lurid regions of their varied sojournings, and their stories helped to fan the anti-foreign flame.

For the Manchus, however, the weapon was double-edged.



It awoke a definitely Nationalist movement, that strove to arouse patriotic memories of the native Ming, and condemned the alien dynasty. Already in July, 1850, a few months after the accession of Hsien Feng, there was an outbreak in restless Kwangsi, and a pretender, significantly assuming Ming descent, claimed the Mandate of Heaven. Rebel bands appeared too in Kwangtung, and Honan, and there was a good deal of desultory fighting. The movements were symptomatic, though so far sporadic and unco-ordinated.

But soon, in the old unseen way, as mysterious and intangible as the hidden workings of the Great Tao itself, in the way of the Secret Society, the scattered forces of discontent began to come together. From village to village the emissaries went, as travelling hucksters, wandering beggars, Buddhist priests, or servants of the private postal agencies. The appeals and promises were extensive. "Let the people combine. The barbarians, from over the sea and the aliens upon the Dragon Throne, shall be destroyed, and there shall come back the Ming, of glorious memory, who had freed the people from the Tatars. There is already in the land a Heavenly Prince (T'ien Wang), who will lead the people along the Princely Way (Wang Tao) of virtue and prosperity."

Such was the word. We may picture its arrival, in the open space beneath the shady trees outside the ancestral hall of the village. The headman and the elders of the council would be there; at least one old scholar, a retired Confucian with eyes grown dreamy in that endless search for the mystic harmony, the final authority in morals and policy; some younger scholars, who had taken degrees, or failed, but were in any case disappointed and disillusioned, being unemployed, or with little prospect of advancement, and attributing their ill-success to the corruption, favouritism and disorders of the times. Many of these were doubtless sincere and able men, with some sense of a mission, and genuinely anxious for reform. But around, looking on from outside the group of "superior men," would be more sinister figures: peasants and farmers in debt, partly through their own improvidence, partly through the wasteful and oppressive taxation; landless labourers; unemployed artisans; ne'er-do-weels of the village and surrounding districts. Some had already acquired a taste for the simple and straightforward excitements of



robbery, brigandage, piracy, and were weighing the prospects for wider opportunities. Such as they were they formed the only available material for the reformers.

But if they were to be kept in any kind of order it could only be through the personality of a leader, like the great founder of the Ming. And here we touch the root of the matter, then, and now.

In the unceasing interactions of "yang" and "yin," creating the pageant of circumstance, there must be leadership; and everywhere and in all ages nations claim their prophets and seers, marked by heavenly signs, and there are false as well as true. The profoundest test of a nation's civilization and culture is its ability to produce leaders; leaders who can arrest decay, and adapt new forces fermenting in the celestial crucible to good ends. When a nation cannot do this it has reached its last disaster. In no country more than in China has this been recognized—in theory. The Confucian ethic is emphatic on the point. But it is always possible, in China as elsewhere, for the signs to be false ones. "The Man from Heaven" may be a mere charlatan, and his chances of beguiling the people are greater or less according to their standard of culture, education, and susceptibility to superstitious appeals. We cannot indeed condemn entirely the use of the latter—employed as they were by the great Ming Chu himself—in the then conditions of China, if the movement was to start at all. They were sustained at first by a genuine energy of idealism and a queer mystical eclecticism wherein Christian and Buddhist jargon were strangely mingled, that impressed European observers, and raised hopes doomed to grave disappointment.

In the ultimate analysis the T'ai-p'ing ("Great Peace") movement failed because its leaders ceased to be true to their ideals and responsibilities. They were weakened by their own dissensions, and, it is to be feared, their licentious and debauched habits. Authority inspired by superstition might withstand such debasing influences for a time, but the ill success that came required the nobler attributes of leadership, and these were generally lacking. There was one exception, who well deserved his sobriquet of "Faithful Prince" (Chung Wang). The best to be said of the others is that they knew how to die. That is no mean epitaph, but does



not of itself indicate qualities to uplift a people against adversity to victory in a high cause.

The leader who came to the front in the Winter of 1851-52 summed up the superstitious hopes and ideas of the confused time. His name was Hung Sui-ts'uan, and he sprang, apparently, from good peasant stock. Though his character eventually proved too weak for his responsibilities, it nevertheless displayed for a time elements of faith and sincerity that won the devotion of his followers. He was a dreamer and mystic, claiming intimate relations with Heaven. His first proclamation, about the end of 1851, declared: "The Most High has issued to me his sacred decree. God the Father, and my divine elder brother, Christ, have commanded me to descend into this world of flesh, and become the one true lord of all nations and kindreds upon earth. . . ." Of more direct and practical import was the announcement of a "Divine commission to exterminate the Manchus, and possess the Empire as its true sovereign." The former peasant accordingly assumed the title of Heavenly Prince (T'ien Wang); accepted those doctrines of Christianity that added strength to his claims; condemned the vices and corruptions of the age, and called on all to extirpate rulers who were examples of them. In sign of their rejection of the alien Tatar dynasty his followers were to cut off their pigtails.

Hung completed the work already begun by the "Triad" Society, gathering up the threads of the earlier rebel movements, and imposing upon the developing organization a regular hierarchy of Princes (Wang), deriving their authority and inspiration from himself.

Before the end of 1852 the movement had become formidable. The Imperial Government sent its ablest General Tseng Kuo-fan against the rebels. The Chinese scene became not unlike that 74 years later, when, in 1926, the militarist North stood against the seething South with the Yangtze River between them. The fighting swayed backwards and forwards. On the 24th March, 1853 (to be the anniversary of a similar event in 1927) Nanking fell, and there was great slaughter of the Manchus.

The Heavenly Prince proclaimed the T'ai-p'ing Dynasty. By June his forces were across the Yellow River. But reaction



was coming. There were tales of atrocities and plunderings to alarm folk with anything to lose; and there were the Bannermen of Peking, and the hardy Mongol general, Sankolinsin, with a reputation to keep up against the presumptuous Southerners. The Imperial Government exhibited some energy. The Bannermen were reinforced by levies from Provinces thought to be loyal. Their reliability was to be ensured by regular payment, and to enable this a special transit-tax or toll on goods moving between districts and Provinces was instituted. It was known as the "li-kin" or tax of one-thousandth (a highly nominal and inaccurate title). It was to form a fresh subject of discord for many years, but it may be said at once that it was not so much the principle of the tax, as the lack of uniformity and the arbitrary and uncertain manner of its imposition that caused the friction.

The rebels were, however, helped, and the Imperial Government distracted by that disruptive Moslem element in Yunnan. But the troubles there had no direct connection with the larger one. It was a local matter, due to ill-feeling amongst the Moslem miners over the exploitation of the copper, gold, silver, iron and lead. There seems to have been some intention on the part of the Government of removing the obnoxious element by a general massacre of Moslems, but if so the plot failed, and the intended victims achieved a kind of independence in Yunnan which they maintained until 1875.

Nevertheless the T'ai-p'ing advance was checked, and the lack of sound substance in the movement began to show itself by its inability to bear misfortune.

Meanwhile that new and important factor so forcefully imposed upon the Chinese scene after the Treaty of Nanking, was being drawn into the quarrel with momentous consequences. That Treaty had opened the port of Shanghai, where the Whangpoo River runs into the estuary of the great Yangtze. By 1845 the British had acquired an area of waste land outside the Chinese City as a "concession," and begun their settlement there. The French acquired similar rights, and their boundaries were demarcated by 1849. By 1853, as in 1927, the situation was getting serious, and the three chief communities, British, French, and American, began to organize a Defence Force. In the same year rebels

entered the native city, and Chinese from there and the surrounding country fled to the Settlement. This was the beginning of a movement which, by 1930, had resulted in there being in and about the Concessions some 49,000 foreigners dwelling amongst over three million Chinese. For the moment the foreigners were mainly concerned to defend themselves, and acted impartially for that purpose against rebels and Imperialists alike. But their sympathies, on the whole, in those early days, seem to have been with the T'ai-p'ing. It was not easy, however, to maintain belief in rebel sincerity and honesty of purpose. The outrageous tales of massacre and destruction, of dissensions and debauchery amongst the leaders, were becoming too insistent.

The movement steadily lost ground.

The country North of the Yangtze was pretty well cleared of rebels by the beginning of 1855, and in March that year, they abandoned Hankow. The Faithful Prince, indeed, held Nanking against the efforts of the Imperial General Chang Kuo-liang, and other Princes still retained some vague authority, but the revolt appeared to be dying of inanition when a new combination of circumstances intervened to strike another deadly blow at the power and prestige of the Manchu dynasty, and thus roused the rebels for their last vain effort.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE ARBITRAMENT OF THE SWORD

THE Treaty of Nanking had improved conditions for foreign traders. But it had not solved the deeper problems of intercourse, and the root cause of the serious troubles to follow was still the inveterate refusal of the Imperial Government to concede equality of status to foreign nations, or to extend the inadequate concessions granted to neighbouring Russia by arrangements more satisfactory to all.

It is not necessary to labour the rights and wrongs of the so-called "Lorcha Arrow" case, for it was but an incident in the larger discord. The facts, simply stated, are these. A vessel named the *Arrow*, owned by a Chinese, was registered at Hongkong, and so entitled to fly the British flag. Its register had recently expired, but its owner, perhaps, intended to renew it, and had merely been dilatory. His vessel, however, was on 8th October, 1856, boarded by Chinese soldiers who carried off some of the crew on a charge, not improbable, of piracy. The flag was hauled down.

It must be remembered that Hongkong had not long been in the hands of the British; that it was a prize of war; and that the spectacle of Chinese, honest or dishonest, claiming foreign citizenship and the protection of a foreign flag, was both novel and humiliating. But the incident would not have led to serious consequences if there had been proper means of intercourse between the two Governments. This was lacking, whilst there was already a strained atmosphere over the question of the opening of Canton.

Protests were made to the Viceroy, Yeh, at Canton. But Yeh belonged to the stubborn "die-hard" school in favour at Court. He refused redress. Fighting began. There were outrages—burnings of factories and murders—by the Chinese. The defences of Canton River were forced in 1857 and, the French having joined the British (with the object of achieving satisfactory relations with China) the city was entered on the 5th January, 1858. Yeh was carried off on charges of



criminal responsibility for the outrages, and died a prisoner in Calcutta in 1860.

Negotiations were opened with the Peking Government, but the Court was naturally infuriated at events. Yehonala, especially, who had borne an heir to the Dragon Throne in April, 1856, had all a mother's instincts aroused by concern for the prospects of a son. The Chung Wang still held Nanking for the T'ai-p'ing, and any fresh surrender to the foreigners would surely complete the growing conviction that the days of the Manchus were numbered. The Court decided to resist.

Meanwhile the British Government had despatched a fresh mission under Lord Elgin to ask for the status of Ambassador, and seek a peaceful settlement. He went North in company with the French Representative. An attempt by the Russian envoy at Peking to mediate failed, and on the inevitable rejection of their demands the Allies proceeded to use force. Fighting was fierce, and the Bannermen showed that they had not yet lost all the qualities of the followers of Jenghiz Khan. The invaders indeed might complain of some of their fighting methods, but arguments drawn from more "sporting" conceptions of what war ought to be are not impressive in these days of "poison gas," and other more unpleasant possibilities. In the end the superior weapons of the foreigners carried the day. The forts on the Pei-ho were captured on the 19th May. Tientsin was occupied, and on the 26th June, 1858, the famous Treaty of Tientsin was signed.

It provided the basis of a real settlement. There was still to be trouble before it was implemented, and it required supplementing by numerous conventions and agreements, but, with the similar Treaties made by Russia, France, the U.S.A. and other countries, the main lines of intercourse between China and the Foreign Powers were now regulated.

The Imperial Government accepted resident Ambassadors at Peking with all the customary privileges. Consular officers were to be recognized and have the usual extra-territorial powers in relation to their nationals, though Chinese were to be associated with them in disputes where Chinese subjects were concerned. Merchants were to have the right to lease land and buildings for the purposes of their trade, and to



travel under passports, but no general right of residence was given. Christianity might be taught and professed. The great Yangtze, and a number of fresh ports, including Newchwang in South Manchuria were to be opened. The troublesome "li-kin" was to be stabilized at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., though how this was to be effected by a central government disinclined to interfere in a provincial concern was not clear. The Supplementary Agreement at Shanghai (8th November, 1858) practically settled the opium question for nearly 50 years on the lines of legalization and regulation, instead of ineffective prohibition. The disorders had led to a great increase in the misuse of the drug, too many seeking in the fallacious visions conjured up by it, the harmony so lacking in the actual world. The Agreement established a heavy tariff on opium of 30 taels per picul (say, £5 per 133 lbs.) with freedom to impose additional transit dues. For other commodities the tariff was limited to 5 per cent. It was a humiliating restriction, and difficult to implement in the lack of any proper central organization for the purpose.

Altogether the Treaty was disastrous for the prestige of the Dynasty, and was bitterly resented by the people. It served to revive the waning T'ai-p'ing movement.

The Imperial forces, fresh from their defeat by the foreigners, moved South and laid siege to Nanking. But the Chung Wang could now rouse his followers to new efforts. He established himself on the North bank of the Yangtze, and held on there throughout 1859. Anti-foreign feeling increased everywhere. The Court's dilemma was serious. The risks of implementing the Treaty seemed as grave as those involved in a refusal to do so. But Yehonala supported the "die-hard" faction in the latter course, and their view prevailed.

Now whatever the rights and wrongs of a quarrel, a settlement once formally reached, must at least be formally repudiated. Further it is expedient to be sure of one's power to renew resistance. These conditions were lacking when the Imperial Government decided not to carry out the Treaty.

The British emissary, with his naval escort, was repulsed at the mouth of the Pei-ho.

The news was received with general rejoicing throughout China, and brought some restoration of prestige and popu-



larity to the Dynasty. The moment accordingly seemed propitious for the suppression of the T'ai-p'ing, so that a re-united people might stand boldly against the encroaching barbarian. At the end of 1859 the Imperial forces renewed operations under Generals Tseng Kuo-fan (significantly a Chinese) and Chang Kuo-liang.

But beyond the seas the Western Powers were preparing to assert themselves. In November, 1859, France and England signed a formal alliance to secure the honouring of the Treaties.

Early in 1860, whilst the allied expedition was preparing, the Chung Wang was forced back on Nanking, but in a great sortie he broke the Imperialists' lines. Stimulated by this success he took the momentous decision to capture rich and beautiful Soochow, standing amidst the network of lakes and canals in the alluvial delta of the Yangtze, famous for its silk, and the charm of its maidens. A great expedition was prepared, and early in May the T'ai-p'ing swooped down upon their prize. There was fierce fighting. Chang Kuo-liang was slain, and the Imperialists, abandoning the city, retired to Hangchow, and called for reinforcements. But the Imperial Government was now faced with the answer to its challenge to the foreigner. In July, 1860, the Allied forces appeared off the mouth of the Pei-ho.

It is a curious commentary on the situation that whilst a renewed foreign war was impending in the North, the Imperial representatives in the South were trying to persuade the foreign merchants and others at Shanghai that their interests lay in supporting the legal government.

On the whole the foreigners were now inclined to agree. The rebels had got completely out of hand. The missionaries had long been disillusioned as to their relations to Christianity. The Reverend J. Holmes, for example, an American Baptist, in 1860, writes bitterly about the revolting idolatry, the low and sensual conceptions of the degenerate leaders, who in default of any real faith in themselves or their cause were coming to demand more and more from the superstitions of their deluded followers.

It must seem strange that the opinion of a few thousand barbarians from overseas should have counted for anything in the matter, but so it was. It was not that the balance of



forces was so even that a featherweight decided the scale, but that on both sides, Imperialist and T'ai-p'ing, there lacked the disinterested, decisive *leadership* that can make itself both trusted and effective.

It was this that the foreigners were eventually to supply. But for the moment there was no real appreciation of what was wanted. There were plenty of adventurers at Shanghai, and, following the analogy of India, they might recruit a mercenary force of natives to weigh for something in the rather casual, cautious methods of Chinese warfare. The first foreign leaders, the Americans, Ward and Burgevine, were, in fact, just adventurers, brave enough, but not possessing the rarer qualities. They prepared the ground, however, and established the nucleus of that "Ever-Victorious Army," whose action under another and nobler direction was to prove decisive.

Meanwhile the Allies, under Generals Hope Grant and Montauban had captured the Taku forts of the Pei-ho in August, 1860. (A few days earlier the foreign volunteers were assisting the Imperialists to repel an attack by the T'ai-p'ing on Shanghai native city.) At Peking there were confusion and divided counsels. Negotiations were opened with the invaders, but many still put their faith in the Banner-men and the Chinese "braves" assembling under Sankolinsin. The Government assumed the attitude that they were being wantonly attacked by aggressive "barbarians," with whom there could be no question of good faith.

The Allies, advanced about half-way to Peking, accepted the proposal to negotiate, and the British emissaries, Parkes and Loch, with a Sikh escort, went forward to meet the Chinese Commissioners. They found the Tatar army assembling, and Loch went back to warn the British commander. It must be admitted that with a hostile force within striking distance of their Capital, the Government had a right to assemble its army, whether the proposals to negotiate were sincere, or only in order to gain time. The Allies, however, might conclude the latter when the Imperial Commissioner, Prince Ts'ai, bluntly informed Parkes that there would be war. The British party set out to return. In the high tension of the moment, when guns go off of themselves, part of the escort was fired on, and the British General, thinking



the truce had been broken, promptly began the action whilst, unfortunately, Parkes and Loch (who had rejoined his chief) were still within the hostile lines. They were seized, accused of treachery, imprisoned and ill-treated. (The Imperial Viceroy, Yeh, had just died a prisoner at Calcutta.) Allowing for the excitement and bitter feelings of both sides there was some excuse for the actions of each. But the swift motions of war do not permit of immediate dispassionate verdicts, and rage and hatred warped judgment.

The fighting began. The Imperial Army was defeated at Palikao, some 10 miles from Peking on the 21st September, 1860. The Manchus had appealed to the sword, and the weapon had broken in their hands. In Chinese eyes it was another sign that Heaven had withdrawn its Mandate.

In the Imperial Palace all was panic and despair. Only Yehonala seems to have kept her head and spirit. Resistance to the fierce barbarians was impossible, but at least they must not be allowed to lay hands upon the sacred person of the Son of Heaven. Prince K'ung, one of the Emperor's brothers, was ordered to reopen negotiations, whilst the Emperor and his consorts fled to Jehol. It was a bitter experience, and its enduring memories were to bear evil fruits.

Prince K'ung's negotiations broke down on his refusal to give up the prisoners. The Allies advanced on Peking, and occupied the "Summer Palace," about five miles to the N.W. Some of the prisoners were then released, others had died after unknown sufferings. On the 13th October, Peking surrendered, and on the 18th the Allied Generals decided to destroy the "Summer Palace." It was a barbarous act, though some of the facts about the prisoners were true and bad enough. It is sufficient to say that, in Chinese eyes, the destruction of beauty was the unforgivable crime, far transcending the just (as they claimed) punishments inflicted on brutal invaders, whose inferior nature had now abundantly manifested itself.

On the 24th October the Peace Conventions were signed with England and France. They confirmed the arrangements of Tientsin, with an added indemnity and apology. Kowloon was ceded to Great Britain, and Tientsin made a free port. Chinese were to be allowed to take service with foreigners. France—it was the reign of Napoleon III—secured privileges



for the propagation of Christianity, and a rather vague right of residence and holding of land for missionaries, which the Chinese subsequently denied having given.

In the following month another treaty was signed with Russia. It conceded the now common rights of travel, trade, and extra-territoriality to Russian merchants. Its pregnant feature was the cession to the Empire of the Tsars of the lands to the East of the Ussuri. In the same year Vladivostok was founded. It was the beginning of a long story, not yet ended.

The campaign, unhappy in its course and consequences, was at least decisive. Resistance was still urged by some, but in the coming internal conflict, their party lost, and the policy of aloofness and isolation was given up. As a sign of the change the Imperial Government had set up in January, 1861, a new Foreign Office, the Tsung-li Yamen, to deal with the Foreign Powers on the basis of equal status. Yet the office was purely a bureaucratic one, providing a means of intercourse, but having no voice in policy. It was rather as though, with us, the Foreign Minister were not in the Cabinet, and the system proved unworkable.

Nevertheless, a new phase was reached when in March, 1861, the first accredited British Representative was admitted to Peking.

The disaster to the Manchus had meanwhile revived the hopes and resentments of the rebels, and a new confusion in Imperial affairs gave them a further stimulus. In far away Jehol the stricken Emperor strove to solace his injured pride and despair in renewed debauch. But outraged nature took revenge upon him. On the 22nd August, 1861, Hsien Feng died. The Ruler of the Celestial Realm was now a child, five years old, and Yehonala was a Dowager.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE DOWAGER EMPRESS

THE child of Yehonala and Hsien Feng, who received on his accession the curiously inappropriate name of Chi Hsiang, or Well-Omened Happiness, was at least happy in his ignorance of the state of his inheritance. It was parlous.

Yunnan was practically an independent state, and Moslems in Shensi, Kansu, and far-away Kashgaria were stirring. In the South the Chung Wang was about to seize the great city of Hangchow. The foreign barbarians were forcing their way into the land at all points, and doubtless—so swift rumour ran—meant to conquer it, like India, where the grim Mutiny had just been crushed.

There was to be a Regency, of course ; and the contest for it would decide the policy for the fateful crisis. The isolationist party was headed by two stubborn Manchu Princes, Yi (or Tsai Yuan) and Cheng, and supported by leading Confucians. They were angry and bitter, and believed they could still rally the country to massacre and expel the presumptuous foreigners. There was—for the Princes—a personal motive, too, of jealousy and fear of Yehonala (her childless elder sister, though senior consort, was of little importance) who was known to be ambitious, and likely to exploit her position of "Mother." Prince Yi had secured the Regency at the late Emperor's death-bed, and now proclaimed it in his own and Prince Cheng's name. Yehonala, or Tsu Hsi (Auspicious Mother), as she was now usually called, was certainly not a Liberal, and hated the foreigners as much as any "die-hard" of the Regency clique. The flight to Jehol, and the destruction of the Palace had burnt that hatred deep, but it had also impressed on her the Empire's weakness in the face of the Foreign Powers. Moreover life held little for her but the enjoyment of power. She knew that the Regency clique would pull her down, and so decided to oppose them with a temporising policy, in hope that a



pacified and restored Empire would some day be able to re-assert itself against its overweening foes.

She had the support of Prince K'ung, and her cousin, Jung-lu, long her faithful friend, and perhaps something more. There was also the famous Eunuch, An Te-hai, who had brains, and could act as secretary, supplying information and advice. They secured the allegiance of the Imperial Guards, and then the grim cortège set out from Jehol. The dead Emperor and the living were returning together to their capital.

On the 1st November, 1861, the party entered Peking. Next day the Guards seized the Regents and their chief followers. They perished by lingering death or suicide, and Tsu Hsi grasped the power, to hold it, virtually, till her death 47 years later. To mark the change the Emperor's name was changed to T'ung Chih (All-Pervading Tranquillity). For the Dowager Empress, contemplating the destruction of her foes, it doubtless had more reality than the former one.

But it scarcely expressed the condition of the country.

The Moslems in the middle of 1862 broke into open revolt in Shensi and Kansu. Soon all the Western Borders were aflame, and the rising spread away to Turkestan, where, next year, there was a massacre of Chinese at Yarkand. In the South, the rebels were seeking to win back the sympathy of the foreigners, and secure their aid. They pressed their claims as reformers, who would expel effete rulers, and inaugurate a new renaissance. It is still a matter of controversy whether the decision of the foreign communities to support the Government was the right one. It gave the dynasty another 50 years of life, and needed reform was consequently delayed too long; but the success of the T'ai-p'ing might well have meant 50 years of anarchy.

The Europeans, indeed, were still averse to committing themselves strongly to either side, but when in January, 1862, the rebels, following their capture of Hangchow, again attacked the native city of Shanghai, French and British troops were sent to defend the Settlements, and the momentous decision was taken for them to support the Imperial forces, now inspired by more invigorating direction. A new leader, a Chinese, the young Li Hung-chang, displayed an eager and vigorous personality.



Accordingly the troops of the late enemy powers, working with Ward's native levies, cleared the country round Shanghai; whilst Li Hung-chang was generally successful in the severe fighting in the Yangtze plains. By the beginning of Autumn, 1862, the Imperialist forces were camped around Nanking. The foreign troops withdrew to Shanghai, but Ward's levies, with the adventurers continually attracted to his standard, operated with varying fortunes in the flat canal-intersected country about Soochow. Ward, however, was killed on the 2nd September, and his successor, Burgevine, quarrelled both with the Imperialist General and the heads of the foreign communities. In January, 1863, he was dismissed by Li, who asked the British General at Shanghai to nominate a successor.

Things were at a deadlock that winter, and it required some new factor to break it. It came, a small thing measured by material standards, one man leading a few hundred Chinese with European Officers, but when on the 24th March, 1863, Major Charles George Gordon was, with the approval of the British Government, allowed to serve under the Imperialists as head of the "Ever-Victorious Army," the importance of the psychological element was strangely demonstrated.

Gordon possessed many of those qualities which the Chinese had, throughout the ages, been taught to look for, but had seldom found in their leaders. There were in him some of the mystic qualities of poet and prophet, of the ideal Sage, seeking the Secret of the Great Tao. Like that Sage he was palpably disinterested, concerned only to do the task at hand, without thought of reward or consequence. An uncanny and careless self-confidence—he went through most of the campaign armed only with a walking-stick—inspired his followers. With a sure instinct he saw that Soochow held the key to the T'ai-p'ing fortunes, and the campaign against it went steadily on throughout the Summer, whilst the Imperialists held the lines about Nanking.

Soochow fell in December, 1863, and with it went the substance in the movement. The T'ai-p'ing leaders who had surrendered there were treacherously slain by Li's order. Gordon, who felt personal responsibility in the matter, withdrew in protest, but resumed operations a few weeks later.



The work had become distasteful, but he honestly felt that for the sake of the Chinese people the rebels should be finally suppressed. Their movement was costing millions of lives—estimates vary from ten to twenty-four—and immense destruction of property, including the famous porcelain industries of Kiangsi, which have never recovered since. The leaders, with few exceptions, were unworthy.

The campaign went on. The early part of 1864 saw the country West of Soochow and the Great Lake cleared of the rebels. Hangchow fell to the Imperialists in March, and then, on the 1st June, 1864, whilst Tseng Kuo-fan was reforming the siege of Nanking, the "Ever-Victorious Army" was disbanded. Gordon received the effusive compliments of the Imperial Government, with the high honours of Yellow Jacket and Peacock's Feather. His characteristic remark that "it was very civil of them," was of the kind to win the heart of the Ancient Sage.

Meanwhile the last of the T'ai-p'ing leaders at Nanking were exhibiting in the final scenes the stoical heroism of their race. The troops still held the walls, whilst the people died of starvation within. On the 30th June, the Heavenly Prince dashed his followers' last hopes of divine intervention by taking poison. On the 19th July, 1864, the city fell before the final assault of the Imperial forces, and on the 7th August, the "Faithful Prince"—"this was the noblest of them all,"—was captured and beheaded. The T'ai-p'ing rebellion was over.

A precedent for foreign advice and assistance had been set up, and bore some other fruits. Halliday Macartney became Li's adviser. Sherard Osborn, lacking in tact and understanding, tried but failed to re-organize the Chinese Navy, whilst Robert Hart, possessed of those qualities, had set up the enduring monument of the Chinese Maritime Customs. But on the Western borders the Moslem canker still declared the vanity of human hopes, and all Asia was in a turmoil, reviving again the problem thought to have been solved in the days of Ch'ien Lung. Moreover there were many questions arising from the vaguely accepted status of the foreigners that required more precise answers.

The Wheel had come full circle. It was now the Chinese who discovered that their status was inferior, and the Foreign



Powers who felt impelled to deny to China the equality they had demanded for themselves. The limitation on the tariff; extra-territorial rights; the permission to foreign priests to expound their way of virtue; were being made the basis of arrogant claims; whilst the demand of the "barbarian" Powers that the principle of "equality of status" should be given visible expression by the reception of their representatives in audience of the Emperor, without the "kow-tow," seemed but another step in the gradual process of lowering the prestige of the Dragon Throne.

It was on this last consideration that the prescient judgment of Tsu Hsi took its stand. The chief hope of the Dynasty, so severely shaken, lay in its ability to maintain the legend of its intrinsic majesty, and exploit anti-foreign feeling. Of reform there was little question. The Confucian system had stood for centuries, and if its principles were acted on all would be well. The Court and the Confucians, indeed, received a reminder that theory was no practice, in the memorials of the Censors in 1866, against eunuchs, corruption, extravagance and luxury, but it was not easy to impress a Dowager Empress, with a keen appreciation of earthly joys, of the iniquity of those things. The Chief Eunuch, An Te-hai, was however otherthrown in 1869. He suffered the capital penalty, but another, Li Lien-ying, became Tsu Hsi's adviser and friend, serving her faithfully, even if he restrained her from the adventurous path of reform. But the more liberal elements did succeed in one point of pregnant import, for in 1867 a college was set up for the training of Chinese students in foreign languages.

Meanwhile anti-foreign feeling was centring round the missionaries, and their claims to residence, and to make converts. It was unfortunate that an unsympathetic attitude towards "ancestor-worship," made it appear to Chinese eyes that children baptized into the alien religion would be definitely withdrawn from the family bond, and taught to despise the ancient customs of reverence and respect. There were cases too of children dying of illness being brought to priests for hasty baptism, and their subsequent death provided material for ugly misrepresentations. The trouble culminated in a massacre of French Priests and Sisters, the French Consul, some other foreigners, and a number of converts



at Tientsin in 1870. But this occasion was not allowed to breed worse consequences, and was settled by apology and compensation. It served, however, to force on the question of the Audience and the Government eventually gave way on this point.

The young Emperor, now 16, had just been married to his cousin, Ahlute, and in November, 1872, he was declared to have assumed authority. A face-saving memorial was drawn up, pointing out that "Barbarians" showed no knowledge of the proprieties, of reverence to parents, of respect for ceremonies. Allowance must be made for them, and if the "kow-tow" were dispensed with in their case, this was merely recognition that they were manifestly inferior to the Chinese, in manners as in all else.

The Audience duly took place on the 29th June, 1873, and Tsu Hsi may well have wondered whether, to Chinese eyes, it was not another symptom of the gathering ruin.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CHEFOO CONVENTION

OTHER problems arising out of the Treaty of Tientsin and its aftermath were those of trade, transport, and extra-territoriality.

Prior to the Treaty the collection of trade-dues was a matter of local concern, in the hands of middlemen, whose success was measured by their ability to judge to a nicety the impositions the traffic would bear. There was much extortion, modified by imperturbable pliability, and readiness to take the "easiest way," if met with a firm attitude. The foreign merchant, indeed, came to pride himself on his ability of "manage" the "native," and regarded it as an asset in his competition with his fellow (it was the era of free competition). Thus, though, as Robert Hart put it, "the system was rotten," yet it was "easy" and, for the foreigners, as well as the whole hierarchy of officials and tax-farmers, a strict and honest one was far from welcome.

Moreover the expenses of the rebellion, and the indemnities demanded by the victorious Powers, made it necessary to raise extra funds, and for this "taxing the foreigner" was attractive and sometimes effective. The Treaty had fixed the tariff, but excuse was soon found for a number of additional imposts under other names, and the foreign merchants were naturally aggrieved. Some of the latter, however, undoubtedly abused their privileges, for a custom grew up, doubtless in return for favours received, of according their certificates of exemption to goods ostensibly purchased by them, but really belonging to native merchants.

However, the Chinese Customs Service was organized, and though it could not deal with the question of the internal transit due, "li-kin," or the irregular local imposts, it soon exhibited, under Robert Hart, a real and growing efficiency. Its Marine Department undertook the whole service of lighting and buoying the coasts and navigable rivers, hitherto without these indispensable aids to safe navigation. The



healthy increase of trade brought a sure and increasing revenue, providing means of guaranteeing the loans of foreign capital for economic development. But it was long before the regrets for the old easy methods had disappeared, and natives and foreigners became used to the rigid and inflexible honesty of the new, and the limitation on the tariff was a sore derogation of China's sovereignty.

The old trading problem of finding China's "needs" still remained. The temporary check upon the opium traffic after the Treaty of Nanking had helped, towards 1860, to produce a reversal of the balance of trade in China's favour. The demand for her tea and silk had grown, whilst British manufactures, of cotton and wool, were not acceptable. Silver began to flow in again.

Meanwhile had come the T'ai-p'ing outbreak, and the continued wars—civil and foreign—announced one decided need. Western civilization took the opportunity to redress the balance of trade through the arms-traffic. The Imperial Government naturally objected to the supply of arms to its rebels, but was eager for them for its own lawful purposes of order and defence. It was not always easy for the foreign supplier to distinguish, or to resist the smiling plausibility of would-be purchasers appealing to "business instincts." And there was always the possibility of squaring the wrong official.

The general effects of the fighting—especially the civil war—were of course thoroughly bad for legitimate trade. The ruin and desolation caused a great reduction in China's purchasing power, but after 1865 this increased again. Lancashire cottons began to command an increased market, and there was even some demand for woollen goods. Great Britain still held the bulk of the China trade.

Then the perennial opium question came to the front again. The Shanghai agreement of 1858 had not fixed the "li-kin," and it promptly became, in the eyes of the foreign merchants, excessive. The plea of the Chinese Government that the obnoxious nature of the traffic justified a prohibitive tax, would have had more force if it had not soon appeared that the taxes were having a "protective" effect, encouraging the cultivation of the native product. Indeed the poppy fields were flaunting their bright colours shamelessly on the mono-



tonous Chinese landscape, and have done so ever since, to the exasperation of foreign traffickers. Since, however, the Chinese wanted opium, and refused to regard its moderate use as more pernicious than that of alcohol or tobacco ; and since the home supply was inadequate and of poor quality ; smuggling became the "easy way" for satisfying the demand. It presented few difficulties in the land of "squeeze" and accommodation, and if England strove to be virtuous, it was again exasperating to know that the unconcerned Chinese was getting his sufficiency from other sources—foreign or home. An edict of 1865 suppressing the cultivation of opium provided another of the proverbial "paving-stones," and the Government renewed the demand, renounced in 1858, for the complete suppression of the traffic.

These things were bad enough.

There was also much bickering over the inland navigation of the great rivers, and foreign claims—to this day effectively implemented—to police them. Merchants claimed to have received a general right of residence, such as Western nations accorded to one another. The Chinese have steadily denied such general right. The Tientsin massacre of 1870 was in part due to popular resentment over the claim. The Tientsin Treaty had given rights to lease land and buildings for business purposes, and a good deal of latitude in interpretation was often accorded, especially to the foreigner who was "tactful," but where there was mutual arrogance, the "easiest way" was too often missed. In any case there was further occasion for extortion. The Government continued to demand severe restriction on the right of residence.

Finally there was the whole vast question of rights of extra-territoriality claimed, and on the whole necessarily claimed, by the foreigners. The difficulty was enormously enhanced by the increasing numbers of Chinese moving into foreign concessions and claiming extra-territorial privileges. There was much abuse of this by criminals flying from justice, and the delicate question of political refugees also began to arise. In matters of debts and contracts there had been the ancient morality of the guilds, making trade possible. Now with the demand for more rigid, legal methods, complaints arose that guild merchants in abandoning the "easy" ways were adopting the more questionable ones of Chinese courts.



In the Shanghai Concession the famous Mixed Court, established fortuitously in 1862 when the Imperial authorities had fled before the T'ai-p'ing, where Chinese magistrates sat with Consular assessors, provided a solution that endured there till 1927, but was always galling for proud or patriotic.

The Chinese Government demanded the abolition of extra-territorial rights. It also claimed to be allowed to appoint Chinese Consuls, a demand long opposed on the grounds that China could not be considered entitled to the privileges of a civilized nation.

There were, however, many foreigners sympathetic to the Chinese claims. The American, Burlingame, secured a Treaty from his country in 1869 recognizing China's sovereignty, giving her the right to appoint Consuls, and according mutual privileges. The British Consul, Alcock, justly pointed out China's superior position in the scale of civilization a few decades previously, and emphasized her right to consideration. But, even allowing for mutual misunderstanding, practical experience showed the need for safeguards if intercourse was to be maintained. The alternative of a return to isolation was impracticable. The Suez Canal was opened in 1869. Western civilization was approaching hot-foot, with its steam-ships, telegraphs, railways . . . and could not be kept away.

An attempt was made by Great Britain in the Convention of 1869 to settle the disputed points. It suffices to say that it was abortive. The Tientsin Massacre, though chiefly concerning France, did not improve the atmosphere, and matters dragged on unsatisfactorily for nearly five years, whilst the Central Government was preoccupied with the Central Asian question (see the next Chapter), when the blood of an Englishman became the price of a solution.

The case was a bad one. The Government of India had proposed a mission under Col. Horace Browne for the opening of trade across the Burmese frontier, and it was thought to be helpful for an accredited British officer to be sent from the Legation at Peking to travel across China and prepare the local officials and people for the coming of the mission. The selection of Mr. Margary was a good one, for he had acquired a practical knowledge of the language, and an understanding of the Chinese outlook. Nevertheless, though the Chinese Foreign Office had approved the proposal, and had provided



special passports, and informed the local officials on the route, the journey through the interior to meet what could be described as an armed invading force coming from the South was open to misrepresentation that aroused angry feelings in the wild frontier lands. Part of Burma, once a vassal of the Celestial Empire, had been annexed by the British. Before long they would doubtless take the whole (as they did, ten years later). This so-called mission, then, clearly indicated the intention to seize China herself, for which purpose the emissary from Peking had been sent to spy out the route. Thus the local patriot, ignoring the permission given by the Peking authorities. It was the difficulty appearing over and over again in China's foreign relations, of getting the Central Government's orders carried out by the local authorities.

Margary, indeed, setting out in December 1874, accomplished his journey across China to Burma in safety, and met Col. Browne, whose mission with its armed escort prepared to advance. Rumours of opposition decided him to send on Margary to explain and report. Margary was murdered (February 1875), and Chinese forces, under the usual ex-brigand turned officer, arrived to bar the way.

Negotiations were opened for redress. There was no suggestion that the Central Government had instigated the matter. It had its hands full with Central Asia, and the crisis brought on by the death of T'ung Chih in January 1875. But there was a lack of proper cohesion between it and the newly-established Foreign Office (Tsung-li Yamen), and there was much procrastination, arousing suspicions of the connivance of high officials in the matter. At last the British Minister enforced his protest by leaving Peking. The Government then accepted the Chefoo Convention, signed on the 13th September, 1876.

The usual indemnity, heavy, though always inadequate, was all that could be done for poor Margary. It was to be made impressive by proclamation and apology, and the tragic part of the episode was then to be considered closed. Of the broader settlement the following were the chief points.

There were to be better arrangements for official intercourse. (A Chinese Minister was duly accredited to the United Kingdom, and took up his residence at Portland Place the following January, 1877.) Transit dues were to be unified



and regulated, and *bona-fide* owners of exempted goods clearly distinguished, so as to stop the practice of consigning goods for transport in the name of a privileged owner to whom they did not really belong. Opium traffic was not to be prohibited, but the principle of regulation by agreement was to be re-established. The importer was to pay the tariff of thirty taels a picul and the receiver the "li-kin." Extra-territorial rights were to be maintained so long as the law of China differed from that of the country accorded them. Generally, the court and law were to be those of the defendant's nationality, and the representative of the plaintiff's country was to be allowed to attend with power to protest a decision. Additional ports on the Yangtze were to be opened, with, however, restrictions on merchants' rights of residence at what were only ports of call. Frontier trade between Burma and Yunnan was to be opened, and the British were to be allowed to send a mission to Tibet.

There were still delays before ratification, and difficulties in meeting the views of other Powers, and of India, interested in opium, and objecting to the uncertainty about the rates of "li-kin." Eventually, by the supplementary agreement of 1885, "li-kin" for opium was fixed at eighty taels per picul, and was to be collected at the ports, whilst the trade in it in the interior was to be confined to Chinese subjects. In 1886, by the O'Connor Convention, China recognized British sovereignty in Burma, whilst the British conceded the Chinese claim to tribute (or compensation for it). A frontier commission was to be set up. The Tibet Mission was abandoned for the time (it materialised in 1903).

This settlement brought a real stabilisation into Anglo-Chinese, and indeed general foreign relations, until fresh disturbing factors once more upset the hardly-won harmony of "yang" and "yin." Meanwhile the Dynasty was enjoying a brief "Indian Summer" before the final cataclysm.

## CHAPTER XIX

### "INDIAN SUMMER"

FIGHTING had been going on against the Moslems, in Yunnan, or Kansu, almost continuously since 1855, and the distant anarchy of Central Asia, where the "khoja" chief, Yakub Beg, had put forward independent claims, had ominously permitted a breach in the Celestial Realm by the Russians, who occupied Kuldja, where the Ili River flows north of the Tien Shan, in 1871. The Government then began to undertake the great work of restoring the Chinese frontiers, and settling again the problem of Central Asia.

A few months before the young Emperor gave his audience to the foreign representatives, the Moslem resistance in Yunnan had been crushed with the sack of its capital, Talifu, and the slaughter of the insurgent forces. Kansu was pacified later in the year. Then, at the end of 1874 (it was a few days after Margary had set out from Peking) the Emperor fell suddenly ill. If he died Tsu Hsi would no longer be an Emperor's mother. But she was determined not to lose power, or allow the risk of a change of direction at such a crisis, for if the Central Asian question could not be solved, the Empire would be exposed to pressure from all around, from West and North, and East and South. (Col. Browne's mission was just setting out for the Burmese frontier.)

On the 12th January, 1875, T'ung Chih duly died, leaving Ahlute pregnant. There was a two-year-old son of a younger sister of the Dowager, married to Prince Ch'un, the seventh son of Tao Kuang, and in respect of him, Tsu Hsi could assume the maternal claims and privileges. In vain the Censor, Wu K'o-tu, made his noble protest on behalf of human rights. The supposed interests of the State carried the day. The claims of Ahlute were ignored, and she died mysteriously the following March. The son of Prince Ch'un became Emperor, under the title of Kuang Hsu, Glorious Succession, and Yehonala could look forward to another long minority



where she would still be the Auspicious\* Mother. It was, alas ! no time for sentiment.

The trouble with England had now come to a head (Margary was murdered within a month of Kuang Hsu's accession), but by the spring of 1875 the Bannermen and the Chinese levies had matters well in hand in Central Asia. They took Hami in April. Next year (a month before the signing of the Chefoo Convention) Urumtsi fell, and in 1877 Yakub Beg fled before his triumphant foes, to die on the 1st May. His former followers turned to civil war, and Yarkand and Kashgar fell to the victorious Manchu forces within one week in December 1877.

It remained to settle with Russia. The negotiations were protracted, but the Treaty of St. Petersburg (12th February, 1881) restored the greater part of Kuldja to China in return for an indemnity of £900,000 and some trading privileges.

These things were not unsatisfactory. Yet the wiser Sages would still shake admonishing heads over the persistent tales of corruption, luxury and extravagance, to which the grim news of the recent suicide of the brave Censor, Wu K'o-tu, seemed to give substance. The Dowager Empress suffered a personal grief in the death of her elder sister, Tsu An.

Now came a long quarrel with France, who in 1882 established herself in Tonking, still claimed as a vassal state by the Celestial Empire. The Chinese gave irregular assistance to the resisting natives, but when the Government was called upon to face the matter openly and squarely it vacillated, whilst its advisors strove to calculate and weigh the value of the thing to be yielded against the chances of success of resistance. In the end, in 1884, it was decided—with reservations—to yield. Then, as always, came the question of fulfilment. The French complained that Chinese irregulars were still aiding the Tonkingese “rebels.” French troops were ambushed. There was a demand for apology, and a £10 millions indemnity, followed, on refusal to comply, by a somewhat treacherous French attack on the Chinese forts at Foochow, and an expedition against Formosa. But the French, by themselves, found China, if impassive, too indigestible. They got no sympathy from England, who refused, as a neutral, the use of Hongkong, thus establishing



a new precedent for the Western Powers, who had hitherto, in their dealings with China, tended to ignore such rules of international law (and indeed, at times, still continued to do so). The conclusion was that the French waived their demand for indemnity ; China made a nominal payment in respect of other claims, and reaffirmed her renunciation of Annam. (The renunciation of Burma to Great Britain came the next year.)

On the balance China had not done so badly, and seemed to be recovering her position and prestige.

Ominous, however, was the decline of the Manchu population in the home-land. In 1878 the Government had partially thrown the country open to organized colonization, and the Chinese, with their irresistible peaceful penetration, were beginning to conquer Manchuria. The possibilities of capitalist exploitation with Chinese labour were coming to be realised under foreign inspiration. About 1890 land and grain companies were formed, with finance and big business playing their part. The inflow of labourers increased. The nobles and officials began to be financially interested in the exploitation, and corruption of the "easy" genial kind spread. A Sage, possessing the Secret of the Great Tao, might have perceived the forces marshalling for conflict about the great undeveloped cradle of the dying Manchu race—the foreign and Chinese capitalists ; the on-pressing Chinese immigration ; the great Russian neighbour, reaching down on the East to Korea, where in 1884, there had been an unsatisfactory collision between China and the despised islanders of Japan.

There were dangerous implications, too, arising out of the economic problem of China herself.

Once again it was evident that purchasing power was declining. There was still demoralisation due to the traffic in, and cultivation of, opium. Inveterate conservatism was hastening the supplanting of Chinese tea by Indian. The silk trade was also falling off. These things were the more exasperating in that the Chinese were showing a greater readiness to purchase western goods, but had not means to do so.

The lack of economic purchasing power was linked to the political problem. It was argued that the Confucian system



was inadequate for modern needs, that there could be no such organization as these required—in commerce, industry, transport, education—without radical reform in the direction of centralization and constructive activity.

The solution, seeking increased purchasing power for the individual, and centralized activities for the State, depended on improved communications. These were thoroughly and traditionally bad. Even the canals—the best part of them—were in decay and disrepair. There was need for roads and railways—especially the latter, where distances were so great.

Politically, the railways, with their concomitants of posts and telegraphs, would make centralised activities practicable; economically they would open up the country's resources for the improving of its purchasing power. Unfortunately there was always the suspicion that they would really only draw the country's wealth away to foreign lands. It was strengthened by the unfortunate necessity of employing foreign capital. China simply had not the means for making the steel rails, locomotives and so forth; nor could she pay for these out of an annual export surplus tending to shrink, or wasted on the purchase of opium. The material could only be secured, at first anyhow, by loan.

The first railways were short lines, from Shanghai to Woosung (in 1875), soon pulled up owing to local opposition, and the seven miles of the Kaiping mines railway (seventy-five miles N.E. of Tientsin) built in 1878, and extended ten years later to Tientsin. By the 'nineties the question of serious development was becoming urgent, and so the competitive scramble amongst the Powers for the privileges of making the loans (or securing the concessions, as the phrase ran) began.

There was some substance in those instinctive suspicions and added fears as to the consequences to political, as well as economic, independence. It scarcely required the insight of the Sage to perceive the need, in those grasping times, for strengthening China's defence, but the Celestial Government was apparently denied it.

It was not until 1894—on the eve of the war with Japan—that an attempt was begun to organize an army on modern lines. In the following year the direction of the work was given to Yuan Shih-kai, a young Confucian of thirty-six, who



having failed to get "distinction" in his literary examinations had entered upon a military career. His "New Model" army formed a division of some 8,000 men and achieved a startling standard of discipline and efficiency. But the inveterate fear of arming the Chinese remained, and not until 1901 were attempts made to reorganize the old provincial "constabulary" (Lu Ying) as a national army.

The building of a modern Navy was begun in the eighties, through the initiative of Li Hung-chang, and China came to possess two small, though for those days, useful, battleships, the *Ting Yuen* and the *Chen Yuen* (built in France), and a few cruisers and small craft. They were organized as a northern and southern squadron, and a building and repairing yard was established at Foochow. Fortified naval bases were begun at Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei. The British admiral, Lang, undertook the work of training and direction. But there were dark rumours that the Dowager Empress had appropriated naval funds for the rebuilding of the Summer Palace, and anyhow, when the day of trial came the Navy—on its material side—proved wanting.

One pregnant change was the introduction in 1887 of western science and mathematics into the examination system. The wisdom of the Ancient Sage would have required some balancing factor to preserve the ordered harmony, but here again insight was lacking, and the consequences were disintegrating.

Yet it would be unjust to lay too much blame on the Government and Dynasty, or to think that they showed less foresight than other governments under like circumstances. The brief "Indian Summer," bringing the reconquest of Central Asia; the recovery of Kuldja; a settlement with England; a not inglorious conclusion with France; and a gradually improving status—Great Britain conceded a Consulship at Rangoon in 1894—was perhaps unfortunate, bringing a false impression that all was well.

Doubtless the Dowager Empress, enjoying her Summer Palace, was pleased to hold it so, and when in 1889, Kuang Hsu, having married her niece, was, at the age of 17, allowed to assume the government, the brooding problems raised by Western contact did not seem insoluble. Maybe that Palace—of evil memories—created a deceptive atmosphere



of peace and harmony in the ordered process of the Great Tao.

The dream, if the Empress ever had it, was as vain as it had ever been. A new and astonishing element flung the primal interactions of "yang" and "yin" into a fresh discord whose echoes still ring harshly in our ears.

It was the Rise of Japan.

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There are accounts of the T'ai-p'ing Rebellion by L. Brine, and by A. Wilson, but probably only obtainable second-hand or at libraries.

W. E. Soothill's *China and England* deals with Nineteenth Century relations, and the absorbing pages of *China under the Dowager Empress* by J. O. Bland and E. Backhouse give full and understanding accounts.



## BOOK V

### THE AWAKENING

CHAPTER XX. THE RISE OF JAPAN.

CHAPTER XXI. "THE HUNDRED DAYS."

CHAPTER XXII. THE "BOXERS."

CHAPTER XXIII. "THINGS THAT HAVE ENDURED . . ."





## CHAPTER XX

### THE RISE OF JAPAN

It is still the misleading custom to speak of Japan as "little," and the Japanese as a small nation, but Japan Proper has an area of 145,000 square miles, compared with 88,000 of Great Britain, and the 182,000 of Germany, and her population in 1930 was nearly 65,000,000. That is a big nation, and even in 1726 the population was between twenty-six and thirty millions, which was a big nation for those days. The present Japanese Empire has an area of over 255,000 square miles and a population of over ninety millions. Those aspects of Japanese civilization, culture, economic and political problems essential for an understanding of her relations with her great neighbour must now be presented.

Japan Proper consists of a group of long, narrow islands on a line running from Lat.  $45^{\circ}$  N. and curving sharply to the West at the parallel of  $35^{\circ}$  N. Its backbone is a mountain range, with laterals running down to the coasts and separating the short but abundant river valleys and their cultivated plains. There are many volcanoes, and the land is subject to earthquakes. It is a country presenting a great variety of features, and calculated to inspire in its inhabitants distaste for monotony and a love of the beauties of nature. But the price paid for the great area of mountain, forest and heath is a heavy one, and only some  $17\frac{1}{2}\%$  of the 92,700,000 acres is reckoned as cultivable. Moreover since meat-eating is discouraged by Buddhism and popular habit, there has been little development of the possibilities of animal husbandry on the mountain slopes. The sea-board however is long, and the inexhaustible seas provide their sure supplies. Thus a population of many millions could be maintained for centuries, whilst frequent internal wars, disease, and occasional natural catastrophe prevented any serious pressure.

The social organization of this land was originally tribal, but its development was markedly different from China's. There the various tribal communities united into a State

constructed on family lines, and fundamentally democratic. The Emperor, though ruling by the Mandate of Heaven, was required to justify it by results. The dynasties (which included two foreign ones) did not present any principle of eternity or nationality.

Japan, on the contrary, has never been conquered, and her dynasty, for all its vicissitudes, claims unbroken descent from the beginnings of the Empire. Moreover the dynasty did not rise by crushing out the tribal chiefs. In Japan there was a true feudal organization, where, even after ostensible union, the tribal chiefs held their lands with all the feudal rights of justice, administration and military retainers. Thus Japan evolved an essentially aristocratic type of society, with a predominant military and land-owning class. Such is not usually subservient to King or Emperor, though an element of sanctity thrown about the Japanese Mikados preserved for them a nominal headship as centre and symbol of the national cult.

Chinese Classics, and Chinese political and social theory were indeed introduced into Japan as early as about A.D. 284, but though they influenced Japanese thought the political and social theories were never effectively adopted, and attempts to apply them literally always broke down on the fundamental oppositions.

The general social culture of Japan was, as elsewhere, built in the first place upon nature and ancestor-worship. It became systematized as "Shinto" wherein the essentially aristocratic, and, later, nationalist features of Japanese society were emphasized. But the Japanese aristocracy was not militarist. There was early evinced that curiosity and love of art and learning which form the sound basis of a progressive civilized society, and Chinese culture helped to satisfy these needs. Nevertheless, the Japanese, whilst they copied and adapted as all nations do, showed powers of selection and continually impressed their own genius on what they took from others.

Buddhism came in the Sixth Century A.D., and was firmly established as a national religion by the beginning of the Ninth, adopting the local gods as it had done in China. Essentially democratic it served to modify extreme aristocratic claims, emphasizing human rights and promising



salvation for all. But the aristocratic principle was not subdued, and the Japanese Buddhist sects significantly divided into two main groups; one for the "people," promising, to suit their humbler capacities, salvation by faith and prayer; the other, for those of sterner, more aristocratic mould, demanding "works"—self-culture, contemplation, the overcoming of circumstances by self-help, the achievement of the true insight through self-mastery and self-discipline.

Japan's early history is mainly one of feudal anarchy, where great families struggled for power, and occasionally deposed and even murdered an Emperor. Geographical isolation helped to save the land from foreign conquest, and though there was little real national unity, the military spirit of the people could always be counted on to repel any threat of invasion, as with the Great Armada of Kublai Khan in 1281. Perhaps that menace hastened on the peculiar process by which unity was attained. Anyhow in 1335, after an anarchical period, the head of the great Ashikaga clan proclaimed himself Shogun, or Commander-in-Chief, and with that title assumed all administrative power, and ruled in the Emperor's name. The system endured till the Revolution of the Nineteenth Century, though the Ashikaga were replaced by the Tokugawa at the end of the Sixteenth. The Imperial Dynasty lived on, strangely preserving its imperial qualities in spite of an enervating seclusion. The chief social and economic problem till the Eighteenth Century was the eternal land question—rents, taxes, the sub-division of holdings.

Intercourse with the West—its traders and missionaries—began in the Sixteenth Century. Christianity had at first great success. Buddhism had familiarized the people with some of its ideas, and the early missionaries were adaptable and conciliatory. But that grim suspicion of political aims, fostered by stories of Papal claims and Spanish deeds, brought its ruin and persecution. Isolationism became popular, and in 1638 the country was definitely closed to the foreigner except for the Dutch station on Deshima Island off Nagasaki. The country was thrown in upon itself, but narrowness of outlook was in fact modified by that single "window" at Nagasaki, for through it came still the books and other evidences of Western thought and culture to satisfy the



insatiable curiosity of the eager-minded aristocracy. The link was maintained and the way prepared for the great change.

The other influence making for change was internal and economic. The cessation of feudal wars after the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate removed one of the natural checks on population. To meet the consequent pressure there arose, as elsewhere, a definite bourgeois class, turning to industry, transport and internal trade. It exhibited at first the defects of luxury, extravagance, and low ideals characteristic of an uncultured bourgeoisie of wealth in its early stages. There was strong opposition from the stern aristocracy of blood and land and military prowess, and out of it grew, in the Eighteenth Century, the cult of Bushido, the cult of the feudal Daimyo or Lord, and his military retainers, the Samurai.

It was meant to mark the sharp distinction between the military and bourgeois classes. It exhibits a return to the ancient Shinto, its nature gods, ancestors, and military heroes. It demands bodily discipline, with appropriate exercises and sports. It eschews extravagance in dress and diet. Learning is encouraged, but above all the Samurai must be brave, warlike and stoical, and the practice of suicide as a privilege emphasizes that death is preferable to dishonour.

Such a creed, barbarous though some of its aspects are, commands admiration. In the Eighteenth Century it could be justified as a necessary phase in the nation's existence, an antidote to the low ideals born of too easily acquired wealth. It is still true that evil as war is, social corruption is worse, and unless mankind in the ordering of its peaceful activities can give scope for the military virtues of self-sacrifice, abstinence, discipline, bodily fitness, patriotism, and courage, that corruption will come, and bring with it not only its own horrors but those of war, revolution and anarchy as well. Moreover Japan can claim that for more than two hundred years the maintenance of a military cult was consistent with peace, internal and external. On the other hand the virtues of her fighting class did check the spread of social corruption, and, when the hour struck, gave her the factors necessary for her national existence.

Japan's Revolution came in 1868. Its immediate cause



was the alarming possibility of foreign aggression. The Tokugawa Shogunate, too, had become effete and unpopular ; there was no adequate claimant to set up a new House ; the crisis demanded decisive expression of the national unity by a real restoration of the sacred person of the Emperor. There was, of course, resistance, and fierce fighting, and some of the bourgeoisie, inspired by the new patriotism, were able to show, as they faced the rebel Samurai, that they had profited by the stern example of the hereditary soldiers. But the Shogun himself renounced his power, and the national forces carried the day. It was then determined to reconstruct the national life by introducing those elements from abroad required to give the country an equal status, spiritual and material, with the foreign powers.

The work was taken in hand with astonishing vigour and completeness, but the aristocratic and military aspect of Japanese society still remains its outstanding feature, and is emphasized in the Constitution of 1889. The exclusive representatives of the old feudality, indeed, the Elder Statesmen, were destined to disappear (there remains but one, Prince Saionji, at this time), but the aristocratic Upper House of Peers has real power, and the Ministers of State are not responsible to Parliament, but to the Emperor, and his Privy Council, drawn from the nobility, and retaining overriding powers.

Such was the settlement, enduring still, though universal suffrage was introduced in 1925. But national unity does not necessarily mean social or political unity, and indeed we are accustomed to regard a healthy opposition of interests as necessary for a nation's life and progress, so long as it does not override fundamental national interests. So far, in Japan, as in England, political opposition, broadly speaking, has conformed to that necessary limitation, though recently there have been excesses by comparatively small sections. The nucleus of the two great parties of Japan, however, already existed in the opposition between the growing bourgeois, industrial class, and the landed interests. At the Revolution the former were still weak and divided, and indeed only became effective after 1915, when commercial interests seemed threatened by the aggressive policy of the military class towards China.



Before that the conditions making clear-cut the division of interests had arisen from the eternal population problem. It could be solved in three ways.

First by a limitation on the size of families, to stabilize the population as France has done. This method has so far not been congenial to Japanese (or Chinese) ways of thought respecting the family bond, and family responsibilities.

For the military party, the old feudal and landed classes and their Samurai retainers, the solution lay in Imperialist expansion, involving war with China to begin with.

For the bourgeois the solution lay, as in England, through the development of industry, and this, in their eyes, required peace, especially with China, the most likely customer. When, later, by the gradual closing of foreign markets, conditions developed which seemed to make a policy of industrial expansion futile, the interests of both parties began to coincide.

In the period following the Revolution, however, whilst the Manchu Dynasty was enjoying its "Indian Summer," and the influence of the Bourgeois Party in Japan was negligible, the imperialist solution of the population problem was both acceptable to the aristocratic party, and prompted by the example of the Western Powers.

The immediate possibilities were represented by Formosa and Korea. The former, after being a final refuge for the piratical activities of the last Ming supporters, had accepted the overlordship of K'ang Hsi, and the population was, in the middle of the Nineteenth Century, and indeed is now, 90% Chinese, with a density, in 1930, of 320 to the square mile. In the 1870's, however, it was still neglected and undeveloped, and could be regarded by Japan as a valuable prospective source of tropical raw materials. Its marked progress, indeed, since 1895, under efficient Japanese direction, provides an argument favourable to Japanese claims.

Korea has an area of 83,000 square miles, and a population of over twenty-one millions, a density of 250 per square mile. The country is mainly agricultural, but has considerable mineral potentialities, important for industry, and now being exploited. But for Japan, looking out, after the Revolution, upon the perils of a larger world, Korea presented chiefly the two vital factors of security, and the possibilities of ex-



pansion into the great undeveloped lands beyond. The first factor was then of most immediate concern. Only eight years previously Russia had secured the littoral north of Korea and founded Vladivostok, and it was clear that this acquisition had not satisfied her expansive aspirations.

Korea had long acknowledged the suzerainty of the Son of Heaven, and its dull and uninspiring history was only stirred by the abortive invasion of Hideyoshi at the end of the Sixteenth Century. But Japan, with no serious expansionist dreams then, was content to retire into herself. It was different now with Russia reaching down the Sea of Japan, and European nations invading great China, that seemed helpless to aid either herself or her vassals, in Annam, Burma, or Korea itself. In 1866 the French had sent an expedition to the latter country to avenge the murder of missionaries. And so, ten years later, Japan stepped into the now crowded Far Eastern scene, and concluded a Treaty with Korea, recognizing its independence, and securing trading rights. China was perturbed, but, her hands full in Central Asia, was not in a position to take open action. But she certainly encouraged anti-Japanese action in Korea, and in 1882 there was an attack on the Japanese Legation in Seoul. This led to the dispatch of Japanese forces, to which China replied by sending troops to protect her vassal, as she still claimed Korea to be. In the end this preliminary quarrel was patched up by the Tientsin Convention (1885) under which both countries were to withdraw their troops from Korea, and each agreed not to send troops there again without informing the other.

So things remained on the surface, but underground the inevitable struggle over the "Hermit Kingdom" went on. The country was in a bad state, sadly needing reform, and the Japanese, who had "reformed" themselves, might justly press their claims to direct the matter, instead of China, still clinging to ancient ways. In Korea itself there were reforming pro-Japanese, and conservative pro-Chinese parties, and a general recognition, amongst those who thought about it at all, that something had got to be done. Matters came to a head with an insurrection, and the King, who had opposed reform, called for Chinese aid. China sent troops, duly notifying Japan under the terms of the Tientsin Con-



vention, but opposing both the admission of Japanese troops, and the reform proposals.

Japan determined to strike, for her security and future. It was partly the question, raised again over Manchuria, of the rights of an efficient, progressive nation, over those of an inefficient and backward one. Granted that Korea had to be reformed, to save her for herself and from other grasping hands, would the work be better done by virile Japan, impelled also by strong concern for her own preservation, or inert China, with her alien dynasty, and small sense of national feeling? The Japanese had no difficulty in answering the question, and faced the immense issues. The sending by China of reinforcements gave their Government a pretext. Their warship sank the transport carrying the Chinese troops on the 25th July, 1894, and war began.

The Chinese were swiftly swept out of Korea. Port Arthur fell on the 22nd November after a two days' assault, and the Japanese forces first surveyed the great central plain of Manchuria. The Chinese Northern fleet, under the gallant Admiral Ting, was destroyed at Wei-hai-wei early the following year, and after further disasters on land the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed the 17th April, 1895.

By it China recognised the independence of Korea, ceded the Liaotung Peninsula, Formosa, and the Pescadores. She agreed to open towns and rivers to Japanese residence and trade, and to pay an indemnity of £30 millions.

It was a terrible disaster for the Manchu Dynasty, and Tsu Hsi—she had now passed the portentous cycle of sixty years—must have trembled before the accusing spirits in the ancestral hall at Mukden, the key to which had gone with the loss of Liaotung. Nor could the Dynasty's prestige be raised in Chinese eyes when the eager European Powers, Russia, France, and Germany, intervened, ostensibly to save a China unable to save herself. They forced on Japan the retrocession of Liaotung and the soil watered by the blood of the Samurai around Port Arthur. But their action was scarcely disinterested, and it set the infernal discords clashing to such cataclysmic purpose, that a whole world has had to change before our eyes, and the restored harmony still eludes us.



## CHAPTER XXI

### "THE HUNDRED DAYS"

THE war of 1894-5 exposed to the World the military weakness of China, and her fate, and possible break-up, became the great problem menacing the comity of nations.

Already her economic weakness, and the need for correcting it by railway development, had started the scramble for concessions. Its manifest dangers suggested the compromise of "Spheres of Interest," where, broadly each would work out its own intent. Great Britain would expect the Yangtze valley; Germany, Shantung; France, Yunnan; whilst Russia would be well placed for Manchuria, just "rescued" from Japan. It seemed a comforting arrangement, and the three last named countries began to act on it.

Russia moved first. Already in 1896 there were some mysterious negotiations at St. Petersburg to secure for her a reward for the "assistance" of 1895. The first tangible outcome was the signing on the 8th September, 1896, of the contract for the famous Chinese Eastern Railway, to provide a direct route from Chita on the Trans-Siberian (begun in 1892) through Manchuria to Vladivostok. The work was commenced in 1897, and completed in 1903 at a cost of over £41 millions. The money was raised through a Russo-Chinese Bank, mainly from French and Chinese investors, the Chinese providing, in effect, the funds for payment of labour, the French financing the supply of material and machinery. Subsequently, when the railway was working, it did exploit the land in a bad sense, bearing away the wealth produced by the inhabitants, who were paid in Czarist notes subsequently becoming worthless. The railway was, however, to return to China after eighty years (reduced to sixty in 1924, that is, in 1963) and China might buy it back after thirty-six years (1939). Thus, ostensibly, the arrangement was purely economic, but the suspicion of a political intention was not unfounded, and other Powers were on the alert.

Germany struck next. The murder of two missionaries gave her the pretext to seize Tsingtau in November 1897, and Russia was forced to show her hand. In January 1898 British cruisers lying at Port Arthur were requested to leave. It was an ominous sign. The United States was a factor in the situation, but her military strength was uncertain, and she was about to engage in a war with Spain. In any case she was expected to be satisfied with the financing of a railway from Canton to Hankow, the contract for which was actually signed in April 1898. The work was delayed, and in 1905 the American syndicate sold its rights to a Chinese group for \$6 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions, but (1934) the railway, so necessary for linking the "Kwang" provinces to the rest of China, still awaits completion. Britain, meanwhile, was in danger of being isolated, and it was small comfort that in February 1898, the Tsung-li Yamen pledged that there should be a British Inspector of Customs whilst British trade predominated. All that the Celestial Government could do to ward off the coming blows was the rather helpless gesture of a Decree (January 1898) ordering officials to protect missionaries.

Then events moved swiftly. On the 6th March, 1898 the Treaty of Peking gave Germany the lease of Tsingtau for ninety-nine years, with railway and mining concessions in Shantung. Within a fortnight (27th March) followed the catastrophic Convention whereby Russia was given the "usufruct" of Port Arthur and the surrounding district for twenty-five years, with the concession for a line to join the C.E.R. Could the Sage, peering into the secrets of the Tao, have unravelled the utmost consequences of this fell stroke, even a Russian Czar might have reproved the influences driving him to disaster. But the adventure seemed worth the risk. There was money in it, and none foresaw the ultimate blood-price, for China was clearly helpless, and what could "little" Japan do except rage?

France followed less aggressively with the lease of a patch of territory in the south of Kwangtung (Kwang Chou-wan), and the concession for the Tonking-Yunnan-fu railway; and Great Britain, rather reluctantly, secured an extension by more than 350 square miles of the territory round Kowloon, and a lease of Wei-hai-wei.



Meanwhile the Chinese having failed to raise the funds themselves for the vital trunk line from Peking to Hankow, the Belgians, after much intrigue between the Powers, secured the concession in June 1898.

So the thing was ill-begun, and gloomy were the discussions of the young Emperor and his Grand Council.

The Council was divided, as was political thought throughout China, into Reactionary and Reform.

Broadly speaking, the former comprised the Manchu Princes and nobles, and the Confucians of the Northern Provinces. They believed in the old ways, and looked to the rigid Empress Dowager, the " Old Buddha " to support them, and restrain the Emperor, should he exhibit—as seemed likely—" dangerous " tendencies.

The genesis and outlook of the Reform Party provides a key to what has followed, both of success and failure. It received its chief support from the South. In one aspect it held nothing new. It derived from Mencius, and the Secret Societies who had given effect to his democratic theory of the People's right to depose effete rulers. But there was also something else—that *was* new. It dates—if such things can be dated—from that fateful decision to encourage the study of modern science, and young Chinese students had been absorbing it in a hurry, and been fascinated by the promises it seemed to hold out.

It was, unfortunately for both China and the credit of Western civilization, a period when Science was bombastic and presumptuous, when the crude Spencerian interpretations of Darwin had captivated young minds with their promise of a final and positive solution of the riddle of the universe. The Chinese had been seeking it for a long time, but after a very different, and, as it seemed to Young China now, with the menace of disruption and subjection upon their land, most unsuccessful fashion. On the other hand these Western " barbarians " had achieved their position—their power to crush China's armies and seize her land ; their power to exploit earth's riches ; by their growing mastery of nature through science. And this same science was teaching that there was really nothing else in life but a crude struggle for existence, determined by chance and external circumstances, in which whoever had the greatest mastery of science would



win. Young China was quite ready to play its part in such a struggle.

Thus Western civilization—doing small justice to itself in that bald, retrograde period—presented itself to the East. Of all the noble story of its arts, its poetry, its mysticism; of its ethics, its insistence on character as the base of all and let science go hang; of the strong teaching of its religion on the sanctity and rights of the individual; of the real implications of that religion; the young Chinese learnt nothing, or worse than nothing. For in the shallowness of that “positive” age it was the custom in the West to speak contemptuously of all those things. So Young China came to speak slightly and contemptuously of the similar basic things in their own civilization—of the family bond, of the divine relationships, and the equally divine sense of propriety, of the mystic harmony of the Sages. The West has, perhaps, saved itself—one is far from sure—by a return to the appreciation of spiritual values, and science has been put in its place as the servant of mankind, functioning for good only when following the moral law, and creating evil when it does not. But in China the spiritual values were not sufficiently firmly rooted. *That* was her true weakness, not her backwardness in science, a thing, after all, not difficult to remedy, for it is far easier to make an electrical turbine or a gramophone than a virtuous man of character and personality.

The outstanding result, then, of China's first organized acquaintance with Western learning was disastrous. It failed to give her what she wanted, and brought a new discord into the land. For the older Confucians, who, for the most part, with sound instinct, held on to what was good in the ancient teaching, were objects of contempt to the young cock-sure Westernized student, and were driven into the reactionary camp. There were selfish motives too, no doubt, for the triumph of the young would mean the displacement of the old, and offices, as always, were hard enough to get and keep. But it would not be fair to attribute the attitude of the older men solely to mere conservatism, jealousy, and fear of loss of place. The best of them must surely have felt some of that hot indignation with which Arthur James Balfour lashed the presumption of the pseudo-scientists of the Herbert Spencer school. Some indeed were ready for reform, con-



sistent with the maintenance of character-training and the old wisdom. Of such was Chang Chih-tung, Viceroy of Hupeh, who attributed all the troubles to opium, the corrupting influences of Taoism and Buddhism, and the stereotyped nature of the examinations. But it was hardly as simple as that, and for cure the blunt old Conservative could only propound a return to pure Confucianism. He would have had some constitutional reforms on the traditional lines of strengthening the right of remonstrance, and the means of presenting grievances, but not a Parliament in the Western sense. “ There were too many fools.” More advanced, though still conservative, was K’ang Yu-wei, China’s “ Modern Sage,” who was a student of European History and Constitutional Law. He admired the West, but showed appreciation for a due subordination of science to morality. He was in favour of real constitutional reform, involving a wide delegation of responsibility. He gained the ear of the Emperor, and if the plans of such cautious reformers could have been carried out much disaster might have been saved.

It was not to be. Whilst we must sympathize with the “ reactionaries ” in the face of blatant Young China, it must be admitted that the Manchu system, with its “ check and balance ” of Manchus and Chinese, was thoroughly inefficient ; that corruption had gone too far, both at the Manchu Court, and amongst the Confucians ; that Chinese culture had not produced the character, the patriotism, the readiness to sacrifice personal to national ends, which the Samurai spirit had sufficiently given to Japan.

The Emperor, however, made his effort, and the Decrees of the 9th June, 1898, opened the brief “ Hundred Days ” of the triumph of the Reform Party.

In the words of the Reformers Kuang Hsu emphasized China’s weakness in the new times. There must be a fresh adjustment. The old ways no longer harmonized with the workings of the Tao. Then came the proposals.

The Confucian system was to be abolished, and replaced by education on Western lines. It was a drastic change, but there was no real body in the thing. To Young China it meant Science, with moral teaching on unhappy Spencerian lines. There were few who appreciated what the West means by a Classical Education in relation to character, or



if they did, were clear as to why Greek and Roman Classics were fundamentally superior to Chinese. As for Christianity, still out of fashion in pseudo-scientific circles of the West, Young China would be ashamed to be thought advocating it, whilst Old China was still contemptuous. There were exceptions, but that was the general attitude.

Of practical import were proposals for technical education, in agriculture and industry. Further reforms of Army and Navy were suggested very tentatively, for proposals involving increases of trained native levies were still alarming to the Manchus.

More disturbing to corrupt officials was the proposal to restore the ancient right of individuals to petition against abuses. Three Chinese newspapers had come into existence between 1870 and 1880 at Shanghai. Others were now beginning to appear at Canton and elsewhere, and were to be encouraged to spread information, making abuses harder to hide. This was pregnant, and whilst reforms were ephemeral, newspapers have continued to exist in increasing numbers. But they are mainly mere journals of opinion and propaganda, giving little real information, and that not reliable.

Finally, came the rash but just proposal to abolish superfluous offices, to cut down entertainments and ceremonies, to regulate the tributes of rice and salt for the Bannermen at Peking.

It was all too sudden, and aroused too many antagonisms. The corrupt, the idle, the selfish, joined in the more reasoned denunciations of those justly alarmed at the materialism of many of the Reformers. The Manchu Princes saw the end of power and privilege, whilst behind was the "Old Buddha" grimly watching, and regretting the authority renounced nine years previously. Perhaps, too, she felt that this was no time to split the country by violent reforms, and that she had a greater capacity to deal with the lowering perils than her weak and gentle nephew. She hearkened to the indignant appeals of the reactionaries, and then a cruel weak plot of the harassed Emperor gave her an excuse, and indeed impelled her to action.

Kuang Hsu was persuaded to order the assassination of the Empress's old friend and adviser, Jung-lu, now considered the chief of the reactionaries. For this he hoped to secure



the aid of Yuan Shih-kai, then engaged as Commissioner in Chihli in training the " New Model " army. But Yuan was no believer in Young China, and he now took the decision which was to place him in fierce opposition to it till the end, when, defeated and broken-hearted, he mounted to the Land above the Clouds. He betrayed the plot, and provided the forces, which, as thirty-seven years before, enabled Tsu Hsi to strike again a successful blow. The Reformers fled, or were captured and executed. It was the 20th September, 1898, and the " Hundred Days " were over.

The Emperor's person was seized. His very life was in danger, and was indeed only saved through the stern protests of the foreign Ministers at Peking. But for the remaining ten years of his reign and life—there was to be but little more for the Dynasty—he was a mere shadow in the land, and the reigns of power were held again by the Auspicious Mother, " the Old Buddha."

The immediate price paid by China was the postponement of all reform. The Emperor's edicts were cancelled, and a stern decree forbade any innovations in education. There was wild indignation in the South, but the movement there though strong, could not resist and went underground. One important consequence of the tension following these events was the bringing to Peking in October of foreign guards to protect the Legations.

Foreign relations, indeed, remained the vital problem for the new Government of the strong hand. It required cautious handling, and the consequences of earlier resistance dwelt still in the memory of the Empress. The situation was more difficult too now, for the ring of enemies was wider, their attitude more disturbing. Territorial concessions were bad enough ; it was worse when foreign representatives could intervene in a domestic matter, such as the life of an Emperor. There were no signs of relaxation of pressure, though the United States had swiftly concluded a successful struggle with Spain, and was again showing interest in Far Eastern affairs. Russia and England, meanwhile, were known to be negotiating an " agreement " about China between themselves. It matured in April, 1899, with ominous implications. Great Britain renounced the financing of railways North of the Great Wall, and Russia agreed that it should form the

Southern limit of her activities. There were other negotiations in train, in particular about the great line to go from Tientsin to the Yangtze, and it seemed that these things were the tentacles of a great octopus, laying hold of China to bind her, and draw the life-blood from her.

It was time to resist, but how? The Bannermen had proved inadequate against the foreign foe, and their numbers were growing smaller. The New Model Army, though good, was small. On the other hand the old fear of native levies was less valid now that there was dangerous foreign pressure. That pressure might indeed be utilized to unite Dynasty and People. The Empress and her advisers determined to take the risk.

At the end of 1898 a Decree went forth ordering the formation of "train-bands," and all Chinese, including the banned Reformers, might be expected to rally to a struggle for national preservation under the lead of the Dynasty.

It was a statesmanlike policy, but in the circumstances of the time, with scarcely a friend in sight—for the United States had not yet moved—it was necessary to exercise restraint over anti-foreign feelings likely to be aroused by a revived nationalism. Unfortunately, forces were stirring that took control out of the hands of the Dynasty, upset its more cautious policy, and brought ruin upon it and the land.



## CHAPTER XXII

### THE "BOXERS"

THE rebellious movement now stirring followed the traditional methods of protest against corrupt and incompetent government. The mysterious Secret Societies came to life again, with their emissaries waging what corresponded to the "election campaign" of more "advanced" countries. The adjuncts were similar—pamphlets distorting the truth, speeches exaggerating the lie, and rumour hot-foot playing on dark suspicions and ingrained prejudices.

It was essentially a Chinese Nationalist movement, with emphasis on the anti-foreign aspect. It sought a return to the old ways, to a reconciliation with the outraged gods and ancestors, hiding their countenances from a land whose people were vainly following new things. It reasserted the ancient belief that only in unity with the Spirits of the Unseen World could the long-sought Righteous Harmony be achieved again, and the black-haired people have rest under the kindly protection of the "Jade Emperor." And first the land must be purged for ever of the discordant "barbarians," and the symbol of the Clenched Fist, the Fist of Righteous Harmony, expressed the forcible method. Then the reckoning with the Manchus could be taken.

The Boxers then had little in common with "Young China," its contempt for the "superstitions" of both East and West, and its admiration for what it thought were Western methods and ideas. Their movement was, therefore, mainly confined to the ruder North, where foreign aggressions were most imminent, whilst at Peking were visible symbols, the Foreign Legations, and, since October, 1898, their guards.

The attitude of the Manchu Court and the hierarchy was dubious and uncertain. There was plenty of hatred of foreigners, but also fears for the fate of the Dynasty. Already ominous reports were current that the bold policy of the "train-bands" was being exploited by the Boxers, whose nationalist emissaries were at work amongst the new recruits.

Gradually the Court divided into two groups. The more extreme reactionaries, headed by the Manchu Prince Tuan (a grandson of Tao Kuang), thought to use the Boxers to gratify their hatred of the foreigners, and wished to see the Dynasty restoring its popularity by leading the movement. The moderate Conservatives, still envisaging reform, saw the double danger of antagonising the civilized world, and encouraging a movement bound ultimately to strike at the Dynasty. Their chief leaders were Jung-lu and Yuan Shih-kai, whose services in the *coup d'état* of September, 1898, had been rewarded by the Governorship of Shantung, where he had taken his "Model Army."

And between the rival parties brooded the "Old Buddha," swayed now to this side or to that as her long-nursed hatreds of the intruders, or her hard-headed sense of what was practicable got the better of her judgment.

Signs of trouble brewing became manifest during 1899. That year, however, the United States reappeared strikingly on the Chinese scene. The American Government had long been urged by advanced Chinese reformers to make some declaration to check the acquisitive activities of other Powers, and a series of Notes from September to November announced the famous policy of the "Open Door, and Equal Opportunity." The United States would not recognize any exclusive rights. The Declaration was not entirely comforting to Chinese patriotism. It did not contain the blessed word "Independence," not pronounced, in fact, by the Powers till, nearly twenty years later, the experiences of the Great War had altered mankind's outlook. There was still too much suggestion of "rights" to exploit China, and though further elaborations made the next year, after the troubles had broken out, bespoke the need for the permanent safety, peace, and integrity of China, they expressly reserved foreign rights secured by treaty and international law. The other Powers, meanwhile, had accepted the general policy of the "Open Door," with "reservations" safeguarding what had already been acquired, whilst Russia cynically asserted that her adherence had already been demonstrated!

There was nothing here to exorcise the storm, nor decide the attitude of the Celestial Government towards it. In December, 1899, the first innocent blood was shed by the



murder of a missionary, the Reverend Brooks, in Shantung. Armed bands began to gather. The Powers made vain representations to the Chinese Foreign Office. In the Forbidden City at Peking the conflict between the two parties went on, but no decisive word came from the "Old Buddha."

Then the storm burst. Massacres began, of native Christians, of missionaries and their families—over 200 of the latter before all was over, and many thousands of the former. The Legation Guards were reinforced on the 1st June, 1900, and the peculiar phenomenon of an International Army began to appear at Tientsin. More than 30 years later the collective wisdom of mankind has considered the practicability of its permanent institution for use against an aggressor. But collective wisdom is still uncertain how to distinguish the real aggressor, and in 1900 a really impartial tribunal to decide that moot point would have had a hard task. Massacres can never be excused, and present-day suggestions that ill-treatment of one's own nationals by a foreign country is not to be a pretext for military action are not practicable. The civilized world, indeed, will hardly regard unmoved ill-treatment by a country of its own citizens. The impartial tribunal, however, would have had to consider Tsingtau, Port Arthur, Kowloon, and Kwangchowwan. But there was anyhow no such tribunal then, and a foreign force was advancing on the Capital to rescue the Legations and the foreign communities.

Whilst full details of what went on behind the scenes at Court are not known, the general picture stands out sufficiently. It exhibits confusion, vacillation, and divided councils, whilst the opposing factions strove for mastery, and the Old Buddha's actions sway as the changing fortunes promise to gratify or disappoint ancient resentments now stimulated by a new menace. Peking itself was seething. A Japanese Legation officer, and a German Minister were murdered. For the ordinary citizens, even the educated, these things were just retributions on the aggressors. But when the Legations were besieged, and a dreadful edict issued for the extermination of foreigners everywhere, there were found high officials brave, or strong enough to protest and disobey. They included Jung-lu, Chang Chih-tung, Yuan Shih-kai, and the veteran Li Hung-chang, all too powerful to be destroyed; but Yuan



Chang and Hsu Ching-ch'eng who had dared to alter the word "slay" in the Edict to "protect," and others of the opposition suffered the extreme penalty for their temerity and heroism.

Admiral Seymour's relief force had to retreat, and the anti-foreign party was triumphant. War was declared on Russia, and the Manchurian question entered upon a new phase. There was a horrible massacre of Chinese at Blagovestchensk, in July, 1900, and Russian troops crossed the frontier and began to occupy the Three Provinces.

Meanwhile the International Army was being reinforced. A German General was despatched to take command, but the matter had become urgent, and before he arrived the relief forces advanced again. The siege of the Legations was raised on the 14th August, and next day the Dowager Empress and the Court fled to the ancient Capital Sianfu—the Western Peace. It was forty years, almost to a month, since the Flight to Jehol.

It remained for the invaders to restore order, to exact penalties, and secure guarantees for the future. Meanwhile the looting of Peking by the Allies recalled the Burning of the Summer Palace in 1860, and completed the destruction caused by the Boxer bands and the fighting around the Legations. It was a sorry business.

The Peace Settlement was severe, though it cannot be called unjust. There was to be a general indemnity of £67½ millions, subsequently funded for thirty-nine years, at four per cent., to a total of over £147 millions. As far as the damage could be measured by material means the assessment seems to have been fair, and much was subsequently remitted. Payments were to be guaranteed by the Customs and Salt Revenue, over which foreign control was extended. The Taku Forts at the mouth of the Pei-ho were to be dismantled, and an extensive system of garrisons instituted (and maintained to this day) to guard the route from Peking to the sea, and along the coast to the Great Wall at Shanhaikwan. They create an extraordinary situation, such as exists permanently in no other independent country in the world. The Foreign Office was to be directly linked to the Grand Council, thus eliminating the previous unsatisfactory anomaly. The most guilty of the reactionaries were executed



or allowed to commit suicide, others were disgraced, and the official class generally punished by a temporary suspension of the examinations in Provinces where the worst disorders had occurred.

These matters, with minor details, were being worked out throughout 1901. The final Protocol was not signed till September, and on the 20th October, 1901, the Court set out for Peking, where it at length arrived the following January.

## CHAPTER XXIII

“ THINGS THAT HAVE ENDURED . . . ”

THE Court re-entered the Forbidden City in sadly chastened mood, and the future looked blacker than even the Protocol had made it.

Russia was fairly launched now on the disastrous Manchurian adventure. In December, 1900, she had secured practical control of the Mukden Province, Fengtien, the former Liaoning. In February, 1901, proposals were formulated, giving her a prior lien on all concessions in Manchuria, Mongolia and Sinkiang. The civil administration of Manchuria was to be nominally restored to China, but Russia was to keep military guards along the shortly to be completed C.E.R. These things did not then get beyond proposals, but meanwhile Russian troops were extensively occupying the country.

There were gaps at Court with the forced disgrace or death of so many prominent figures. Li Hung-chang had died in November, 1901, and Yuan Shih-kai became Viceroy of Chihli in his place. Jung-lu followed on the last long road in 1903.

And the West had conquered, not only with its arms, but with its ideas. If it is an attribute of greatness to accept the inevitable with dignity, Tsu Hsi must be accounted great. Her Decree of February, 1901, announced the need to strengthen the Empire by adopting the best methods of foreign countries. A telling phrase declared the intrinsic defect of a system that, becoming stereotyped, had failed to encourage independence of mind and ability. There was no inferiority, for the people were reminded that their ancestral teachings were those of Europe, both requiring sympathy and understanding between rulers and ruled. It was in the application that China had failed.

Reforms were now to be carried out, an earnest of them being the First Reform Decree issued immediately on the



return to Peking. It withdrew the prohibition on inter-marriage between Manchus and Chinese, reserving, however, the Imperial Family, which was still to keep its blood pure. The foot-binding practice of the Chinese was deprecated. Manchu princes were to be educated, and a general re-organization of schools and colleges made, preparatory to the introduction of a new system. Official assistance was to be given to students to go abroad.

All this was promising, but other forces were now afoot to stultify Reform in favour of Revolution. Its protagonists, re-asserting the ancient principle that only a virtuous people can make a virtuous State, pronounced " Responsibility " to be the key to individual virtue. The People must, therefore, be responsible for their government. The implication was a Republic; and a young Christian of Kwangtung (born in 1866), named Sun Yat-sen, had been working for it on revolutionary lines since 1895, but without success. Even after 1900 the unrest in the South was still insufficient to enable action, and Sun had to fly to Japan, where, in 1901, he laid the foundations of the Party of Revolution, whose plans were to mature ten years later.

Meanwhile all was overridden by the Manchurian crisis, though, significantly, it seemed to stand outside Chinese history. The Russians showed no real intention of evacuating the land whose economic possibilities were now being confirmed and revealed. In default of China, Japan intervened, claiming justification in the menace to her national existence. The claim was valid, for a Russia in Manchuria must have been followed by a Russia in Korea (her troops were already at the Yalu). Even if there were imperialist motives behind Japan's action (which is doubtful) she could claim as good a right to Manchuria as Russia who had given the challenge.

Japan accepted it. The great battles on the Manchurian plains flung back the Russian armies, the Samurai went in with the sword in the trenches before Port Arthur, where more than 50,000 Japanese fell, killed or wounded, before all was over; and the Russian Baltic Fleet, whose strange voyage nearly swept Europe prematurely into the gathering catastrophe, went down in the Straits of Tsushima. Amongst those who won distinction, fighting for Japan, was a young Manchurian Chinese of no education, named Chang Tso-lin,



who commanded a band of "frontiersmen" (otherwise "brigands"). He and his men, after time-honoured custom, were subsequently taken into the Chinese Government service, and his informed activities for the restoration of order in Manchuria earned him promotion to the Military Governorship of Fengtien.

The Treaty of Portsmouth (U.S.A.), 5th September, 1905, gave Manchuria back to China, a strong point to refute charges of Imperialism against Japan, who secured, however, (no excessive reward) the Russian lease of Port Arthur and Liaotung (due to expire in 1923) and the part of the C.E.R. from Changchun southwards, subsequently named the South Manchurian Railway, with all the Russian rights and privileges.

The passive Chinese Government confirmed these arrangements by the Treaty of Peking, in December, 1905. There were laid then the seeds of future trouble in some natural, but not very precise agreements, whereby Japan proposed to protect her hardly-won rights. The Chinese were not to build railway lines "parallel" to, or prejudicial to the interests of the S.M.R. (There had been a recent precedent to the same effect in the contract of July, 1903, for the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, mainly financed by British capital.) The Japanese claim, reasonable in bandit-ridden Manchuria, to maintain railway guards, as Russia was still doing, was disputed, but eventually acquiesced in by China. Japan agreeing to withdraw, simultaneously with Russia, when tranquillity was sufficiently re-established.

The reactions to Japan's victory were immense, and China was by no means insensitive to them. A great Western Power had been defeated by an Eastern one that had adopted Western science and Western constitutional methods, in apparent confirmation of reformist doctrines. The growing activities of the Revolutionaries—Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Revolutionary League" was spreading amongst Chinese all over the world—emphasized the arguments of the less radical as to the necessity for forestalling them by further immediate reform.

The Government accordingly responded. The old examination system, where all depended on Essays on texts drawn from the Classics, was revised to require a knowledge of modern science. A Civil Service Commission was to end



the age-long abuses and corruptions over posts and appointments.

The Army reforms proposed the abolition of the militarily useless Provincial Constabulary (Lu Ying) and the building up of a national force on the nucleus of the New Model Army of Yuan Shih-kai. By 1905 this was established in six divisions of 12,000 men each. Yuan was then removed from the command, four divisions placed directly under the Ministry of War, and a skeleton organization for the thirty-six divisions of the future National Army drawn up. It had reached about 100,000 men (60,000 in the North, 40,000 in the South) by 1908. One purely Manchu division of 10,000 trained on the new lines was also raised and stationed at Peking.

The outcome of this reversal of traditional policy was uncertain. The new National Army might prove a binding force, stimulating the sense of unity and patriotism. It might support the Dynasty against Revolution, or, equally, Revolution against the Dynasty. Or it might simply encourage a spirit of militarism, to find scope either in external or internal activities. As events were to prove there was neither time nor tradition for building up the real spirit of loyalty and patriotism, lacking which an Army becomes a dangerous machine.

The Navy, never recovered from the disasters of 1894-95, did not receive attention till the next reign, a Decree of July, 1909, proposing re-organization, and the creation of naval schools and training facilities. A few cruisers have been acquired, but, as with the army, the navy has found no true focus for its loyalties.

In 1906 came the Constitutional Reform proposals. They rejected the basic principle of "Responsibility," demanded by Sun Yat-sen and his school as an ultimate if not immediate goal. The Conservative Reformers proposed only to make more effective the force of public opinion on the Executive. The Emperor was to remain responsible to Heaven, but Provincial Councils, with advisory powers, were to be set up, to be followed, after a period of preparation, by the creation of an advisory National Assembly. These bodies actually materialized in the next reign, but were swept away in the larger movement that then began. On the whole they were



wisely conceived, and might well have acquired responsibility as the intellectual leaders came to prove themselves worthy of it. But the proposals were those of an effete and alien dynasty no longer respected or trusted.

Finance is ever an important consideration in all reform, but the Government's hands were tied by the Treaties and their galling restrictions on tariff freedom. Great Britain in 1902 had proposed in the "Mackay Treaty" to allow a substantial increase to  $12\frac{1}{2}\%$  in the import and  $7\frac{1}{2}\%$  in the export from the  $5\%$  duty fixed at Tientsin (1858), on condition of the abolition of li-kin. A national currency was to be created, the lack of which made most percentages somewhat meaningless. But the Treaty never became effective, and China did not acquire tariff freedom till 1st January, 1931. A national currency still remains an aspiration, though a State (Ta-tsing) Bank, with a right of issue was set up in 1908, and became (1st August, 1912) the Bank of China under the Republic.

In 1907 regulations for the reform of the Courts of Justice were issued. The proposed Mackay Treaty had given a stimulus to this needed reform by offering the abandonment by Great Britain of extra-territorial rights when China should have put her judicial house in order. The new regulations were elaborated in 1910, and contained many good intentions, but circumstances have prevented their full realization. The International Committee of Inquiry reported (September, 1926) some progress, but many grave defects. The Courts were not yet in a position to afford security "against arbitrary action by military authorities." In consequence extra-territorial rights remain, and presumably must remain, till "the house is in order."

That Reform should mean the moral uplifting of a people, without which no Reform could be effective or permanent, is a truism in Chinese as in European ears. Rightly or wrongly, Chinese reformers believed that the abuse of opium was a root cause of China's moral troubles. The judgment was probably exaggerated, for root causes go somewhat deeper. But undoubtedly opium was, like alcohol, a source of economic and moral evil, and Prohibition seemed the only remedy. In November, 1906, an Edict ordered all land to be withdrawn from poppy cultivation. Restrictions were



placed upon smoking, which was forbidden for those in the Civil Service. In the following year (1907) the important agreement was made with the Government of India under which imports were to be gradually restricted by ten per cent. a year, with final extinction in ten years. Native production was to be reduced in the same proportion. This was confirmed by an agreement of May, 1911, when the import tax was also increased to 350 taels per picul. Imports from India actually ceased on 31st December, 1917. A certain amount of smuggling appears to be going on, chiefly from Persia, but apart from that Prohibition has failed. The latest reports (1933) show a great increase of home cultivation, the use of the drug is open, and it provides a source of revenue to Provincial and National Governments, as well as to the illegitimate authority of war-lords, bandits and Communists.

The changed conditions in Manchuria, where, since the “ opening ” of the country in 1878, the population had grown from perhaps 500,000 to nearly 17 millions in 1907, 90 per cent. Chinese, suggested an attempt to make it an “ integral part ” of China Proper. In 1907 a Viceroy was appointed over the military provincial governors, as a first step to introducing the Chinese civil administration, and improving conditions for economic development. In 1909 an agreement with Japan fixed the Korean boundary somewhat in China’s favour, but Koreans were to be allowed to settle freely in the disputed district ceded to China. The Japanese secured fresh railway concessions, and there was to be co-operation in mining.

These latter years also brought two other important matters affecting foreign relations to the front.

The British mission to Tibet, proposed in the Chefoo Convention, had not materialized, but a dispute with India over the frontiers of Sikkim had become perennial, and in 1903 the Younghusband expedition forced its way into the Forbidden Land. A settlement on the frontier question was reached, and trade relations opened. The Chinese Government in 1906 recognized the arrangement, and also agreed not to intervene in Tibetan internal affairs, but this proved impracticable. There were risings, recalling the days of the European Mediæval Papacy, or the troubles of 1848, when a Pope had fled from Rome. In 1910 the Buddhist



Pope, the Dalai Lama, fled to India and remained there till after the Revolution. The Chinese have never given up their claim to suzerainty, but in November, 1932, the Nationalist Government concluded a peace with Tibet on the basis of autonomy, and fixed a boundary.

The other problem of foreign intercourse was the awkward one of the commercial boycott as a political weapon. It is obviously hard to distinguish a "patriotic," "Buy Chinese" campaign from an anti-foreign movement. It is equally hard, in such matter, to separate private from government activities. In 1905 there was a boycott—of course not officially authorized—in retaliation for the anti-Chinese immigration campaign in America. The protest of the U.S. Government provides the classic argument against the weapon. Announcing that the Chinese Government will be held responsible for any loss caused, it declares it the duty of the Government to stop a movement contrary to Treaty provisions, and "an unwarranted attempt of ignorant people to meddle with international relations."

The assumption of "ignorance" sounds convincing, but the "people" may be given credit for knowing their own feelings, and could ask pertinently what they were to do. The weapon has not been renounced. More ominous was the Ta-tsu Maru incident in 1908, when a Japanese ship landing arms for Dr. Sun's Republicans was seized by the Chinese in "Portuguese" waters off Macao. Japan forced restitution and the Chinese replied with a boycott.

It must have been with a grim sense of failure that the "Old Buddha" contemplated this last event and its occasion. It will be agreed, however, that she and her advisers had made a real attempt at reform. The elements of national unity were there in the breaking down of social barriers between Manchus and Chinese, in the creation of a national army, and in the constitutional proposals for increasing contact between rulers and people. The reforms in education, judicial procedure, the anti-opium laws sought, at any rate, an uplifting of the people.

But the reforms were never given a chance. As 1908 drew on with growing rumours of Republican activities, the "Old Buddha" felt her powers failing. She was 75, and most of her generation, like herself, had failed to find on earth



that empty secret of longevity, and gone to seek it at the Court of the "Jade Emperor." There were Yuan Shih-kai, and Chang Chih-tung of the strong men about the Court left, but for the rest only the shadow Emperor, his brother, Prince Ch'un, and that brother's son, P'u-yi, not three years old. And with the vanishing blood of Nurhachu was disappearing also the pale remnant of the sturdy virile race that had burst down upon Peking 280 years before. The garrisons were still there, and in the Tatar quarters of other towns, but there was a listless air about them, as though the accumulated boredom of two centuries of garrison life had left the last descendants without a soul. There was no support there, none anywhere.

We cannot gauge the attitude of the "Old Buddha" to the unfortunate Emperor, in those last days of THE PAST. Perhaps she felt that his hands were indeed too feeble to hold the power, and preferred a Regency of his brother; perhaps there was still resentment at his "unfilial" conduct in 1898.

We are not likely ever to know. But when on the 15th November, 1908, the "Auspicious Mother," the Dowager Empress, Yehonala of the blood of Nurhachu, "mounted the Dragon" for the last long journey, it was presently announced that the Emperor Kuang Hsu had died the previous day, and the child P'u-yi was now Emperor under the resounding title of Hsuan T'ung, "He whose word goes forth universally." He is still with us, but his word does not carry very far, and the Dragon Throne is empty.

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# BOOK VI

## TRAVAIL

CHAPTER XXIV. THE REVOLUTION

CHAPTER XXV. THE FIRST PRESIDENT

CHAPTER XXVI. WORLD DEBATES

CHAPTER XXVII. RESURGENCE





## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE REVOLUTION

*Ref*  
THE new factor in the recurrent cycle now approaching was "Young China" with its materialistic, somewhat cynical outlook, that gave its ultra-Conservative opponents so strong a case against it. Between the two extreme groups were a few seeking a synthesis, a harmony of East and West, of new and old, of material and spiritual, without yielding any part of their people's true soul.

This was the solution congenial to the real Chinese ideal, reproving alike reactionaries and blatant Americanized "progressives," and Dr. Sun Yat-sen owes his great position in Chinese eyes, in spite of much practical failure, to his expression of it.

He sought, of course, independence and equality. They are the essentials of any nation's soul, but the natural claim raises the whole vast problem of a people's worthiness for them.

Dr. Sun frankly faced it, and his Three Principles recognize that no people has an abstract right to independence, much less equality, unless they have the appropriate qualities, national and individual. The sound State must, as the old wisdom had taught, be built upon the sound individual, but the individual must learn to find his place in an ordered comprehensive scheme. It was here that the Chinese system had failed. It had produced an individual whose outlook was still too bounded by the family, tribal, or at best, provincial range; a people who by custom and historical circumstances had never truly known itself as a nation. And the bitter consequences were now manifesting themselves. China was becoming a colony, a field for exploitation for all the world.

In his First Principle, then, Dr. Sun inculcates the importance of Nationalism. The People must recognize their intrinsic unity, and so, in the first place, must not neglect the old learning and characteristics that, so far, had alone helped to make them one. These must be held on to, but,



as even the "Old Buddha" had said, that did not mean a slavish adherence to old forms. The old teachings should inspire, not direct or control. The people, whilst reverencing the Past, must enforce their claim to national individuality by recovering their creative power. And, recalling how, in former days China had not disdained to honour foreign teachings, the Christian revolutionary appeals to the new China to seek added inspiration in what is best in the West.

Thus Dr. Sun cast his net wide. The Confucian of the old school would find solace in the just appreciation of the ancient lore; Young China might see a promise, expanded and made definite, indeed, in the succeeding principles, that material and political advance on Western lines would be encouraged; and those of more comprehensive vision than either could hope for an harmonious blending of material and spiritual to direct the lines of a true advance.

In his Second Principle, Dr. Sun finds the remedy for the weak spot in Chinese culture, in democratic responsibility. The emphasis is not on liberty. There has indeed, he says, been too much liberty, too little sense of what is due to the community, to those outside the family bond; too much fear of a strong Central Government. The people must acquire a sense of responsibility to that wider community which is the nation, and be ready to sacrifice personal freedom to gain national freedom. They must appreciate, however, that political responsibility means ultimately no more than ability to recognize and promote the true leaders, and with frank admission of the inequality of natural gifts, jealousy and self-seeking must vanish in the sense of common service rendered by each in proportion to capacity.

Constitutional machinery must, therefore, be built up to give effect to the principle of democratic responsibility. It should distinguish as separate functions besides the three—executive, legislative and judicial—of Western political theory, the characteristic Chinese institutions of public service examination, and censorship, and these have in fact appeared as constant factors in the numerous Constitutions the Republic has evolved. The control proposed for the people is ambitious and probably quite impracticable, even as an ultimate ideal. Besides the basic power of choosing their governors, the modern American devices of direct initiative, revision and



repeal of laws are proposed for them, as well as the power of "recall" or dismissal of government officials.

The Third Principle faces the material aspects of the problem. Dr. Sun accepts the scientific views of Young China, justly recognizing that a sound civilization requires a basis of material well-being. But whilst industrialism must therefore be developed, its evils must be avoided, and the proposed solution is Socialism, though adapted to China's traditions and peculiar needs. Capital, of course, is required, for raising raw materials, for providing machinery, factories, transport, but it must belong to the People, be directed and controlled by the "State" responsible to them. But since China is so backward in material and industrial development it will be wise for a time to borrow foreign capital and employ foreign specialists. It was a galling confession, and strange, too, from one who complained of China's exploitation by foreigners, but hard necessities explain the inconsistency. So with the fundamental question of the land. Dr. Sun does not propose Socialism there. Every farmer is to cultivate his his own land, but he is to abandon the ways of Forty Centuries, and employ machines, water and electrical power, chemical manures, scientific methods for cultivation and dealing with diseases and pests.

But all such possibilities await the solution of the political problem, for the economic depends on the political, not the political on the economic.

This was indeed clear enough to Dr. Sun. The political situation was confused, the attitude and outlook of the politically-minded unpromising. The unfortunate suspension of examinations under the Boxer Protocol had produced an angry idle group of would-be graduates. And posts were still few for the qualified; corruption, nepotism and bribery to secure them rife; whilst uncertainty of tenure impelled the intensive exploitation of a probably brief opportunity. More than ever immediate and superficial success in "management" and avoidance of trouble became the criterion of ability; more than ever the man of larger view and initiative who would not yield to ephemeral circumstances was discouraged. It was an atmosphere where only the shallow and self-seeking could hope to flourish. The altruists and patriots of Dr. Sun's ideal, though there, were not in the



ascendant. A general agreement that the Manchus had to go only aggravated the political problem by the necessity of finding an adequate substitute.

But Revolution had to come, and its forceful manifestations would constitute the "Military Phase," too optimistically expected to be brief. Then there was to be a period of "Tutelage" during which the country's fortunes would be frankly directed by the Republicans of the Unity League (formed by Dr. Sun in 1905, and subsequently developed into the Kuo-min-tang—a literal Chinese translation of the Latin words Re-public, and the English "party"). The Party would prepare the people for the final constitutional stage.

The general scheme was good, but the way of Revolution is always hard. It is proving far longer than the enthusiasm of its author anticipated, and the time for final judgment is not yet.

Few things are certain in politics, but an observer in 1908 could safely have declared that the collapse of the Manchus was one. The Regency, indeed, pledged to reform, did purport to fulfil its promise. The Provincial Assemblies began to meet late in 1909, but they had an air of being outside the realities of the time. The same atmosphere of aloofness and detachment hung round the National Assembly, which, in accordance with the reform scheme of the Dynasty, met on the 3rd October, 1910. It was an "Assembly of Notables," significantly similar in composition and fate to the one which had vainly tried to stem the flood-tide of the great French upheaval. It comprised about one hundred members nominated by the Emperor, and another one hundred nominated by the Provinces. It was to advise the Government in the preparation of a Constitution. Its authority, derived from the Government it was to advise, was obviously small. It was prepared, however, to function, though it was incapable of the strong action necessary to save the situation.

But the Government, indeed, was past advising. It had dismissed its strongest man, Yuan Shih-kai, on the 1st January, 1909, within six weeks of the new Emperor's accession. The personal reason alleged—Yuan's betrayal of the late Emperor's plot in 1898—may have been good, though it is ill letting personal motives decide actions when dynasties are falling. But Yuan could not, any more than Mirabeau in France, have



prevented the crash. The Government, represented by the Regent Prince Ch'un and his Council of State (with possibly, Kuang Hsu's widow, Lung Yu, behind the scenes) was not conciliatory, and was soon at loggerheads with the Assembly it had set up. A promise was, indeed, made for a Parliament to be elected in 1913, but when the Assembly demanded an immediate change of the Council of State into some form of Cabinet, preliminary to accepting responsibility to the Assembly, the response was less satisfactory. The Chinese are ready dupes of the word. The People (represented by the Assembly) having asked for a Cabinet, a Decree of the 8th May, 1911, obligingly set one up. But the change ceased with the name, for its members were still the former Council of State, and they recognized only the authority of the Son of Heaven, temporarily embodied in the Regent.

The exciting cause of the brooding outbreak curiously links the political problem to the economic. The latter centred still round the question of railway development.

This, from about the year 1908, had taken on a new phase. Prior to that there were the "Spheres of Interest." Japan had kept hers in Manchuria, contracting for the railways to Antung on the Korean frontier, and to Kirin on the Sungari. French and Belgians capitalized the important Kai-feng-Honan line reaching up the valley of the Yellow River; the Italians secured a contract for a line to tap iron and coal in Shansi, though the capital seems to have been mostly British. Great Britain also financed, in partnership with Chinese capitalists, the Shanghai-Nanking, and Canton-Kowloon railways.

Any elements of unfair exploitation were, however, being rapidly reduced. The railways were making the natives richer, a proof being their growing ability to buy back foreign-owned lines and to consider financing new ones themselves. Thus, the American concession for the Canton-Hankow railway was resumed in 1905, and though the line has never been completed the failure must be attributed more to political than to economic and technical difficulties. The Chinese have also bought back the Italian line in Shansi, and, most striking of all, the great Peking-Hankow line in 1908 for £5½ millions. Moreover, the Chinese were beginning to insist successfully on getting a full share of control and management. Thus



on the Shanghai-Nanking Railway they have the Presidency of a mixed administrative board.

The situation, then, was developing satisfactorily for Chinese patriotism, and consciousness of the increasing strength of Chinese bargaining power in face of a competitive struggle for privileges between the foreigners brought that struggle to a close and inaugurated a new co-operative era.

Its beginning is marked by the £8 millions contract for the second great trunk line from Tientsin down the coastal plain to Pukow, opposite Nanking on the Yangtze. It was secured by a German-French-British consortium, but, though faced by so formidable an alliance, the Chinese made such satisfactory arrangements that "Pukow terms" came to be the norm for future contracts. The line was to be a Chinese Government-owned railway, and constructed and worked under Chinese Directors. The foreign capitalists secured guarantees for efficient working through a proportion of foreign advisers and administrators. In 1910 the U.S.A. joined the Consortium, which signed an agreement for a £10 millions currency loan on the 15th April, 1911, never floated, however, owing to the Revolution. The same year the Group proposed a contract for the completion of the Hankow-Canton Railway, and for important lines to tap the valley of the Yang tze to Szechwan. There was to be a nice division of construction between British, German and American engineers, but "Pukow terms" provided for the Central Government's share of control. This all seemed satisfactory still, but again the incalculable human element intervened with an agitation that proved the final factor in the Manchu overthrow.

The railways, under the judicious combination of Chinese management and foreign advisers and specialists made profits. They, therefore, became a matter of direct local interest; and age-long tradition required that the profits of local activities should, broadly, be locally enjoyed. Moreover there was the ingrained fear of a too-powerful Central Government. Dr. Sun, indeed, was trying to exorcise this fear, but the Central Power he envisaged was to become responsible to the People. If, however, the Manchu Government got control of the railways it would have added means for power without the responsibility, and then goodbye to both Nationalist and



Constitutional aims. The order of May, 1911, placing the Imperial Post Office, first established in 1896, in connection with the Customs, under a Central Ministry of Posts and Communications, with a view to a government monopoly, was another blow to cherished local interests.

Dr. Sun was in England, but he and his friends, with sure instinct, perceived that the fateful hour was approaching. To their general appeal to Nationalism, to the allurements of democracy, to a planned social and industrial organization for material well-being, could be added direct appeals to local feeling, pride and cupidity. It was dangerous and inconsistent, but these are the qualities of all revolutionary actions. The agitators redoubled their efforts. The recent agreements for railway and currency loans were represented as fresh efforts of an effete government to place China under foreign tutelage. Japan was declared to be steadily strengthening her grip on Manchuria. It was time to act.

Throughout the later half of 1911 the unrest increased. There were student strikes in August, then riots in Szechwan. But with Dr. Sun still away the actual outbreak seems to have been premature, and precipitated by a bomb accident leading to the discovery of the revolutionary headquarters at Hankow.

On the 10th October the troops at Wuchang, acting in conjunction with revolutionaries across the river at Hankow, mutinied under Li Yuan-hung.

The "Military Phase" had begun. It promised at first to be short and sharp, but actually seventeen weary years passed before any decided claim could be made that it was over, and it is perhaps not over yet.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE FIRST PRESIDENT

THE Revolution had come.

The movement was general and spontaneous in the South, where the troops of the new army followed the example set at Wuchang. The Tatar garrisons went down, and the ending of nearly three centuries of subjection was marked by the removal of the "pigtail." Canton proclaimed a Republic on the 28th October, and Republican refugees at Shanghai began to form a Provisional Government. Dr. Sun was not back till December, when the first fighting was practically over.

Meanwhile the Dynasty proposed resistance. The Imperial Guards could still be trusted, and the Court on the 14th October hastily recalled Yuan Shih-kai who called on his trained levies to support the throne.

The National Assembly tried to assert itself, putting forward demands for a Constitution, with a responsible Cabinet, and the exclusion of the Manchu Princes. The immediate concession of these far-reaching demands declared the Government's consciousness of its weakness, and the gesture came too late. "Young China," clinging to Dr. Sun's principle of responsibility as the cure for China's ills, would only envisage its application through a Republic. But political responsibility for the people requires leaders, and ability to recognize the worthy ones, and it is here that China has failed so signally.

Yuan Shih-kai, anyhow, had no illusions as to the capacity of Young China to provide the leadership and organizing capacity through which alone responsibility could become a reality. He believed that Monarchy was still a necessity for unity and order. He desired reform, moderate and cautious, but revolution must be kept down. He therefore accepted the Premiership on the 8th November, with practically dictatorial powers.

His armies moved south ; there was fierce fighting along



the line of the Yangtze, especially around the triple town Hankow-Hanyang-Wuchang, where the Northerners were victorious. But they were repulsed at Nanking, and there were ominous reports that Northern troops were becoming infected by the propaganda of the South. In the Outlying Lands, too, revolt had spread. Mongolia and Tibet had declared independence by December 1911. Manchuria, on the other hand, showed little sympathy for the revolutionaries, and Yuan secured its allegiance by placing it under the control of his protégé, Chang Tso-lin. But in China Proper military success for the Dynasty was not practicable.

The Armistice accordingly was signed on the 3rd December, though conditions still remained very disordered.

The Republicans set up a Revolutionary Council at Nanking under Wu T'ing-fang, and negotiations began between them and Yuan's representative, T'ang Shao-yi, who proposed Constitutional Monarchy. The Republicans refused compromise, and, towards the end of December, clinched their position by electing Dr. Sun President of the Chinese Republic. Yuan then decided to accept the Republican principle as the only hope of unity. On the 12th February, 1912, the young Emperor, Hsuan T'ung abdicated. Another cycle had been completed.

The pregnant moment was fittingly marked by a renunciation in the true spirit of the Taoist Sage, and Dr. Sun then exhibited the principles he had preached. He resigned the Presidency in favour of Yuan Shih-kai, and unity became possible.

Yuan was accepted in his stead by the Nanking Council on the 15th February, 1912. Though not yet formally inaugurated, he properly proposed the restoration of order, but his measures laid the disastrous seeds of the long years of military anarchy.

He may have already envisaged a restoration of the monarchy in his person. He was certainly convinced of the need for a strong central government. He took anyhow the fateful step of appointing officers of his National Army with combined Civil and Military powers to the Governorships of the most distracted provinces, in abrogation of that ancient principle of Chinese political theory. They



received various titles, but are sufficiently described by the familiar one of Tu-chun, or Army Commander. Some, like Chang Tso-lin, were frankly of the adventurer or brigand type, lacking the mental and moral discipline of the classical education, and so completely unfitted for civil authority. Others, if of the scholar class, were mainly those who (like Yuan himself) had adopted a military career in default of achieving distinction in their studies.

The "Tuchuns" have been a sore trial for China; nevertheless they did their work for the moment, and order was restored. Yuan was inaugurated President on the 10th March, 1912, and the Provisional Constitution was adopted by the National Council at Nanking on the same day. The "Military Phase" was ostensibly over, but unhappily Yuan, doubtless for good reasons of his own, still maintained the Tuchuns in their posts. If he had lived long enough he might have supplied a focus for their loyalty. As things turned out he left them with their selfish ambitions excited by power and opportunity, and unbridled by any real respect for moral obligations or traditions, and with their instinctive opposition as soldiers to the Republican politicians.

The story of the Republic now officially established will be best grasped if analysed into stages.

The first, from March 1912 to December 1915 presents the Constitutional struggle between the Republican advocates of responsible government, and the party of the President which did not wish to go beyond the "advisory" principle already conceded by the Manchus. The second covers the brief interlude from December 1915 to March 1916, when Yuan sought to restore the monarchy in his person. There follows till 1924 a renewal of the constitutional struggle, ostensibly over the question of provincial autonomy or centralization, but soon degenerating into a mere anarchy of uninspiring struggles between rival Tuchuns. The fourth stage, 1924-28, witnesses the revival and triumph of the Nationalist movement, and the general, though incomplete, recognition of a National Government. The fifth, still with us, exhibits the efforts of that Government to confirm its authority, reconstruct the State, and maintain the National status.

In a world differently devised China might have been



permitted to work out these stages alone. In the world as it is all was distracted by outside influences—the rival interests of other Powers, the World-War, the national problem of Japan. And a world responsible for those things must share the responsibility for China's troubles.

The Provisional Constitution of 1912 gave the President considerable executive powers, but the principle of responsibility to the people was preserved by the right of a National Council, representing the Provinces, to supervise, and, in the last resort, impeach him. This did not please Yuan, who might justly claim, on Dr. Sun's own principles, the need for a period of tutelage. But Yuan was not trusted by the Republicans, who feared, with some reason, that he would only use such a period to establish firmly and permanently an autocratic power. Yuan, indeed, continued to appoint his *Tuchuns*, and replaced some of the Southern ones, of whose loyalty he had doubts, by more trusted adherents of his own. His revival (18th August, 1912) of certain Confucian ritual, and the assassination under suspicious circumstances of opposition leaders, lent grave weight to Republican views.

The President's great difficulty, however, was money. He managed to secure the £5 millions Crisp Loan in 1912, and in 1913, ignoring the National Council, he negotiated with a six-Power Group (Great Britain, Germany, Russia, France, Japan, and U.S.A.—though the latter withdrew) one of no less than £25 millions for Re-organization. This brought on the crisis.

The Republicans, meanwhile, in the National Council acting as a Constituent Assembly, had proposed responsibility to a Parliament of two Houses. It was elected, and actually met on the 8th April, 1913, nineteen days before Yuan secured his "Reorganization Loan." It was to devise a really permanent constitution, but it was soon clear that the military phase was not yet over. Undoubtedly Yuan intended to resist the establishment of responsible government, and he now had the financial means to do so effectively. The Republicans were determined to fight for it.

They rose in the South in July 1913, but by September Yuan and his trained troops had conquered. By the middle of 1914 a new Constitution announced that the old "advisory"



principle had triumphed. The President, like the Son of Heaven, was to have full powers, but would listen to the advice of the people's representatives after the ancient fashion. But the Constitution was to be "provisional," with the implication of advance some day towards responsible government. The defeated Republicans had perforce to be content. It is, of course, possible that such advance would have been made under Yuan's constitution, but it was ominous, from the Republican standpoint, that a new Decree in June 1914 asserted the continued value of Confucian teachings. There had meanwhile been some restoration of Chinese authority in Mongolia and Tibet, gratifying to patriotic feeling, and adding to the Government's prestige.

Then came the Great War to upset all human calculations, and bringing Japan once more violently upon the Chinese scene.

Japan had secured by her railways, and the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula, a real economic grip upon Manchuria, but political opinion was divided as to ultimate aims. The party of the land-owning, former feudal classes was still very definitely the party in power, and had organized in 1900 as the Sei-yu-kai to maintain the principle of ministerial "irresponsibility." This party had successfully brought the country to the position of a Great Power.

About 1909, however, the opposition of the growing industrial and business interests became assertive. Its policy of industrialism required both markets and raw materials, especially coal, iron, and other metals in which Japan is not rich. Markets were not easy to find. Already the return to Protectionism was becoming manifest everywhere. China was an obvious one, but internal weakness and disorder would reduce her potentialities. On the other hand any attempt by Japan to interfere would cause resentment, and the market might be lost. It was a delicate situation, requiring careful handling.

As to Manchuria, with its eighteen million inhabitants (1911) nearly all Chinese, any attempt to annex it (as Korea was finally annexed in 1910) would equally arouse resentment. Besides it was not very suitable for Japanese colonization. The Industrial Policy of the Party, subsequently called the Min-sei-to, proposed then that Manchuria should



not be annexed, but be a source of raw materials, exploited by Japanese capital employing local or seasonal Chinese labour, the natives in their turn providing a market for the finished products.

Chang Tso-lin, however, on his appointment after the Revolution, had restored the military system of government existing prior to 1907. He recognized Yuan as President in 1912, and continued to support him, but all hopes for a civil administration in Manchuria, primarily concerned for its economic development, were deferred. Military interests came first, and though Chang kept his provinces clear of civil war, it remained a bandit-ridden land, and an undue proportion of the revenue went to the upkeep of army and arsenal. The Japanese and Russian troops remained guarding their respective railway zones. But the position was unsatisfactory, for neither the industrialists nor the militarists of Japan could witness unmoved the resources of the country being employed to increase military strength to the detriment of economic development and the purchasing power of its inhabitants.

This was the situation when the Great War came. Japan expelled the Germans from Shantung, as she had expelled the Russians from Manchuria, and China again looked on at operations partly in the "leased territory" and partly in her own.

Yuan meanwhile was pursuing his plans for strengthening the Central Government, and had probably by this time decided to restore the Monarchy in his own person. Envisaging all the circumstances, and the possibility of a renewed struggle with Japan, his judgment can hardly be condemned, even if we accept the story of Marquis Okuma that he was offering Germany alliance in return for support.

The Japanese, however, could claim that the disorders in China—they had been going on for over three years—gave them a right to intervene. They claimed, too, that any attempt to restore a monarchy would merely increase Republican disorders.

Events moved rapidly. Tsingtau fell on the 7th November, 1914. In December Yuan was performing the Imperial rites at the Temple of Heaven, and on the 29th December the law giving him a ten-year term as President was pro-



mulgated. He had funds from the Reconstruction Loan, and coins began to issue with his effigy.

Then on the 15th January Japan presented the famous Twenty-one Demands. The general effect of them was to give her control in Shantung in place of the Germans; an extension of her leases of Liaotung and the S.M.R. to ninety-nine years (1997 and 2002 respectively), with right to lease land in S. Manchuria, and to travel and trade. There was to be preference for Japanese capital and advisers in Manchuria, and, significantly, arrangements for co-operation with China in the opening up of Mongolia. There were also certain coal and iron concessions in China Proper; whilst a final group, not included in the actual Convention signed on the 25th May, 1915, would, if implemented, have brought Japanese advisers and Japanese police into the Central Government of China.

The Demands might well be regarded by China as unconscionable, even in an epoch of World War, with force in the ascendant, even under a suggestion of German intrigue, even on the plea of China's disorders and incapacity. On the Japanese side there was concern for Japan's economic position, and a more far-reaching claim that the inefficient must not stand in the way of the efficient. The doctrine should have appealed to a Young China imbued with the principles of Herbert Spencer, but seemed distasteful in this application. Resentment was deep and bitter, and Japan's action did much to strengthen Nationalist feeling. Yet hatred of other nations is, after all, a poor thing whereon to build national sentiment, and it has not succeeded in giving China either leaders she can trust or a true public spirit in her people.

For the moment, however, resentment had the upper hand and minor jealousies were stilled. Yuan could expect that the wave of patriotic feeling would indeed bear him to the throne. A renewed agitation to effect this developed as the year went on. Patriotic leagues for the same purpose began to form. But as the prospect came closer opposition began to re-awaken. The cry went up that a return to the Monarchy could only mean a renewal of the old fruitless cycle of rise, stagnation and decay. It was time to make a break and set out on a new path. The South, anyhow, would take the risk, and eschew the seeming "easy way."



For the Japanese the situation was intriguing. They knew Yuan was an enemy, and had no desire for his advancement. They claimed to be aware of the strength of Republican feeling, and an official warning sent on the 30th October, 1915, expressed the view that any attempt to restore the monarchy would mean a fresh upheaval. The other Allied Powers later expressed the same opinion. It proved to be correct.

Yuan, however, was not to be deterred. A Convention gathered, packed with his adherents. It gave a formal declaration in favour of a monarchy on the 11th December, worthless, of course, as an expression of public opinion. On the 12th December Yuan accepted the throne. The interlude in the Republican story had begun.

It was a very brief one. Rebellion promptly broke out in far-away Yunnan. It spread promptly to Kweichow. Before January was out the South was in a blaze of Republican fury, and as the unrestful Kwang Provinces declared for rebellion, Yuan, on the 22nd March, 1916, cancelled the monarchy. The Republicans set up a government at Canton, and the country seemed definitely split.

Yuan died on the 6th June, 1916. He was only 57, and even if we do not accept at its face-value the graceful apology with which he announced his failure and departure, we should be glad to think that his disease was a broken heart. He was a man not scrupulous in his means, but the times were hard, and we must count him a patriot.

The interlude, anyhow, was over.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### WORLD DEBATES

YUAN'S death cleared the way for a *rapprochement* by Japan, whose bourgeois interests, strengthened by the stimulus to industrial development resulting from the Great War were pressing for it. The U.S.A. were showing concern, and after their entry into the war, it was necessary to get an understanding with them. Accordingly, in the Lansing-Ishii Notes of November 1917, an important precedent was created when the two Powers recognized the independence and integrity of China, and declared themselves opposed to the acquisition by any governments of special rights detrimental to those things. But, as has now become common, reservations damped the force of good intentions, and Japan—for here both militarists and bourgeois were at one—secured recognition and sanction for her own special interests.

Meanwhile, in China, the disappearance of the would-be Emperor, announced the third stage of the Republic, when, in North and Centre, rival Tuchuns faced one another; whilst in the South, Young China, with Sun Yat-sen, strove to maintain Republican principles and set up a rival government that claimed authority in the Kwang Provinces, in Hunan, Kweichow, Yunnan and Szechwan.

Early in 1917 the Allies became anxious for China to be committed to their side. There were some enemy ships to be seized, and though no military assistance could be expected she might provide a supply of coolie labour (actually about 175,000 were recruited). The Allies were prepared to suspend the Boxer payments for five years, to revise the tariff, and provide a loan of about £1 million. Tuchuns generally were favourable, but Young China was uneasy lest entry should increase their influence, and wanted more guarantees for the promised benefits. Consequently there was a good deal of hesitation which received expression in the restored Parliament that had met at Peking on the 1st August, 1916. The Tuchuns and their Confucian ad-



herents were violently opposed to the Parliament, mainly representative of Young China. They made the war an issue, and pressed for an immediate declaration. The confused struggle went on throughout the first half of 1917. In the end the Parliament was scattered in Cromwellian fashion in June 1917, and after a farcical attempt to restore the dynasty the Tuchuns assumed power—and began to quarrel over it.

War, however, was actually declared on Germany on the 14th August, 1917, and, as a necessary preliminary to an active part in it, a campaign was inaugurated against the South. It was during these operations that the names of Wu Pei-fu, a graduate who undertook an army career, and Feng Yu-hsiang, the "Christian General," a convert since Boxer days, first became prominent. But the "Constitutionalists" held their own, whilst faction increased in the North, where, by 1918, the Tuchuns had split pretty definitely into the centralising group, supported by conservative Confucians, known as the Chihli, and the rival Anfu claiming to stand for provincial autonomy. To the latter (at that time) belonged Chang Tso-lin of Manchuria, and they and their chief leader, Tuan Chi-jui, were generally supported by Japan, whose readiness for commercial co-operation did not go as far as desiring a strong militarist central government in China.

But, meanwhile, stupendous and catastrophic, had come another offspring of the Great War to disturb the already sufficiently tangled skein.

In November 1917 the Anfu Cabinet at Peking received a flamboyant declaration announcing the advent of Revolutionary Russia, and a new dispensation for the world's ills. The Bolshevist Government, with some excess of enthusiasm subsequently modified, declared that everything taken from the Chinese People by the Tsar's Government would be restored to them. This was gratifying, but did not amount to much at the moment. China had still a Civil War and a World War on her hands, and Chang in Manchuria, which was chiefly affected, had declared his independence. Besides, the principles of Bolshevism hardly appealed to a military and conservative clique. It soon became clear, too, that those principles were having a disintegrating effect in the



Outlying Lands—in Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan—as the Revolution spread extensively along the Siberian borders.

The Chinese Government, after some hesitation, decided to ignore the Declaration, and in March 1918 broke off negotiations with the Soviet, and signed a military agreement with Japan, giving her authority to protect the Northern Frontiers. A subsequent arrangement provided for more active participation by China in the Siberian operations. As these involved the use and extension of Manchurian railways, Japan provided loans for the purpose (the Nishihara loans) and for munitions and upkeep of forces, the proceeds of which appear to have been used for their own purposes by the Anfu leaders. In 1919, however, Mongolia was for a brief space restored to Chinese sovereignty, and its autonomy cancelled.

Meanwhile the Great War had ended, and, with peace in the air, a Conference between North and South was proposed for ending China's Civil War. It met at Shanghai from November 1918 to May, 1919, and the fighting, though still desultory, died down. There was a strong motive for peace at home in order to make a good showing at the other Peace Conference—at Versailles, and there was plenty of good-will amongst the civilians of both North and South. But it had become clear that Young China was determined to shake off Japan's shackles of 1915, and Japan, foreseeing the probable reactions of an extreme nationalism on her own policy of commercial co-operation and exploitation of Manchuria, used her influence on the side of the Tuchuns. The Southerners emphasized their Republicanism and insistence on the principle of responsibility by demanding the restoration of the Parliament forcefully dismissed in 1917, but their own position was weakened by faction also. Their enemies could draw a pungent moral from their unfitness for the responsibility they were claiming for the people. The Shanghai Conference broke down in May, 1919.

Young China's influence had, however, inspired the Delegation sent to Versailles, and its programme. This contained a comprehensive demand for the abolition of extra-territoriality, of the Legation guards; for the remission of the Boxer Indemnity, and reform of the tariff. In return



China would be prepared to accept a measure of temporary control over railways, loans and currency. The return of Shantung was to be demanded. The programme was not entirely unreasonable, but corrupt Anfu leaders had too much personal interest in railways and loans to view international control of them with equanimity. Their opposition revived the faction struggle of the North, the Chihli accusing the Anfu of being under the influence of Japan, and appealing to the South to support its patriotic attitude.

In this confusion the Versailles compromise was reached on the 30th April, 1919, whereby Germany was to hand over her rights and privileges in Shantung to Japan, but Japan was to recognize the sovereignty of China. Other matters were postponed, though an Arms Embargo (which proved a dead letter) to restrict the means of civil war was agreed to on the 5th May, 1919, at the moment of the breakdown of the Shanghai Peace Conference.

Young China expressed its feelings in the famous boycott of May, 1919, against Japan. It was, in its inception, a Students' movement, enthusiastic for a genuine Nationalism. But the guilds, the working-classes, the merchants and traders, responded to the call with an impressive unanimity, whilst neither persuasion nor prison could damp the fiery zeal of the advocates of both sexes. The spontaneity and universality of the movement, vouched for by all observers, is a tribute to the organizing power of Young China, and evidence of the growing strength of nationalist feeling.

The weapon proved effective, hitting Japan hard on her industrial side. And militarism anyhow had had its day for the moment, and, with the still growing strength of industrial interests, the boycott helped to confirm the Japanese Government in its conciliatory mood when the Chinese question became an international one at the end of 1921.

Meanwhile throughout the rest of 1919 the opposition between Chihli and Anfu widened, and in the middle of 1920, the former, on the strength of the old accusation that the Anfu were subservient to Japan, secured the somewhat embarrassing support of Young China, and drove their rivals from power. Chang Tso-lin, confuting the charge of being in Japanese pay had also, on this occasion, joined the Chihli. But the new governing Tuchuns, Chang himself, Wu Pei-fu



and Tsao Kun were no more democratic than the old, and the South resumed its former independence and propaganda, setting up a South China Republic, with Sun Yat-sen as President in May, 1921. A rump of the old Parliament assembled at Canton, and about the same time a fresh factor of disturbing significance appeared in the formation of the Chinese Communist Party.

In these circumstances the Washington Conference opened on the 12th November, 1921, to deal primarily with the Chinese Question which had become a menace to World Peace. It found the nations weary of war and overburdened with debt. It was more than ever important not only to reduce armaments but restore trade, and peace in China was not the least necessity for this. Japan being conciliatory the prospects for agreement were good. The Chinese, however, again pitched their claims pretty high. Their general purpose was to secure equality of status, guarantees for territorial integrity, tariff-freedom and abolition of extra-territoriality. The question of fitness was countered by a promise of Reform, worth little, however, in the prevailing political anarchy. The other great object was the abrogation of the 1915 Treaties with Japan. In the end China got a good deal.

The Nine-Power Treaty, signed the 6th February, 1922, by Great Britain with the Dominions and India, U.S.A., Belgium, France, Italy, Japan, Holland, Portugal, and China, guaranteed the independence and integrity of China and the principle of the Open Door. There were to be no more Spheres of Influence, nor mutually exclusive opportunities, nor any taking advantage of conditions in China to secure special privileges. Her rights as a neutral were to be respected.

The Powers also agreed to consider the withdrawal of foreign garrisons, the surrender of foreign post-offices, and the suppression of unauthorized wireless stations, but they claimed the right to see that China carried out the contract obligations of the C.E.R.

By a separate Treaty, Japan agreed to restore the German leased territory in Shantung, and this was effected in December, 1922, the Japanese troops being finally withdrawn a year later. Great Britain offered to restore Wei-hai-wei (effected 1st October, 1930). Japan further finally withdrew the unimplemented Group V. of her Demands of 1915, and



moreover renounced any monopoly of capital investment, or preference in appointing advisers in S. Manchuria. Her change of policy was definite, and maintained to 1927, whilst the Industrial Party (which actually secured a majority in the General Election of 1920) had a ruling voice.

The Powers agreed to set up a Commission on the question of extra-territoriality. The Commission, reporting in September 1926, was unable to pronounce China worthy of the equality of status demanded, and this matter, like others, awaits the solution of the political problem, though in 1929, Italy, Belgium and others, following the example of Great Britain in 1902, gave academic approval of the principle of abolition when practicable.

The famous Mixed Court at Shanghai, however, which was taken over by the Consular Body at the Revolution in 1911, was restored in 1927. A Provisional Court was then set up to be succeeded in 1930 by a Chinese District Court and Branch High Court with full authority over Chinese, and foreigners without extra-territorial rights (e.g. Germans), for civil and criminal cases, and for all cases where Chinese were defendants, the Municipal Council (on which Chinese were now seated) being represented by its Advocate only. This arrangement was to last three years and has apparently proved satisfactory, for it was renewed for another three years on the 8th February, 1933. It marks an advance for China, but then the political problem has been solved at Shanghai by the presence of foreign troops.

China got no tariff freedom at Washington. Concessions were however made of effective increases of 5%, with a surtax of  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  (more in some cases) bringing the total general tariff allowed to  $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ . Likin, which if promises could kill, should have died several times already, was to be abolished, though temporary transit taxes up to  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  were to be allowed.

The Boxer Indemnities were dealt with separately by the Powers concerned.

Payments to enemy Powers had, of course, ceased in 1917. The U.S.A. had already (December, 1908) remitted nearly \$11 millions of the \$24½ millions capital amount originally due to her, to be used for the education of Chinese students in China and America. Arrangements were made in May, 1924, for the remainder to be employed for similar beneficent



purposes. The British "China Indemnity Act" of June, 1925, proposed to place all the renewed payments after December, 1922 (about £7 millions of principal and £4½ millions interest) to a fund for education, research, river conservancy in China, and other purposes beneficial to the mutual interests of both countries, and a Delegation went to China to make practical proposals. The Act, however, was never implemented owing to conditions in China. After the establishment of the National Government in 1928 the matter was taken up again in collaboration with it. The general principles agreed on were embodied in the British Act of March, 1931, whereby after certain grants from accumulated sums, one-half is paid to a Chinese Government Commission for the purchasing of railway material in England. The rest is handed to Trustees for purposes of mutual benefit to China and the British Empire. It is intended that the interest earned by the railways on the capital thus invested shall be used for educational endowments. The position reported at the end of 1932 was that out of £11¼ millions to be allocated by 1946, £1,433,000 had been spent on materials purchased from Great Britain, and £115,000 spent directly in China. France will devote any surplus not required to secure a loan made in 1925 to measures of mutual benefit. Italy, Japan, Holland, and Belgium have proposed the setting up of funds for culture and public works. Part of the Russian refund is intended for the Lunghai (Yellow River) railway, the rest for education.

To sum up Washington and its aftermath, China was to have another chance. The possibility that she would not take it was envisaged. In such case there was to be full and frank communication between the signatory Powers.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### RESURGENCE

WHILST the political problem was slowly and unhappily working itself out between 1916 and 1924, Young China was undergoing a renaissance. It was essentially a youth movement, with both the merits and demerits of youth.

There was plenty of enthusiasm, and much of the public spirit and readiness for self-sacrifice, hitherto somewhat lacking ; but it was all rather unbalanced, not deeply rooted in sound moral principles, and inclined to be contemptuous of the advice of the older and wiser. Nevertheless the movement did recognize the ancient fundamental principle that the sound State can only be built upon the sound individual, and it set to work to try to spread education amongst the masses.

The difficulties were enormous. Any attempt—so difficult with the Chinese monosyllables—to create an alphabetic script would increase the barrier between the North and the Cantonese of the Kwangs. On the other hand an adequate literacy with the Chinese script is hard to acquire. But about 1917 definite proposals for spreading the knowledge of it were made. There was to be a campaign to teach a thousand characters, and cardboard models and lantern slides were to be employed to familiarize the masses with the sight of them and their meaning. But though the patient learner may well feel proud when he knows those thousand signs, they will hardly prove adequate for the needs of a "responsible" citizen. It was hoped, however, to provide a sufficient literature employing only the simplest style and language. At the same time attempts were made to break down the barriers of the spoken languages and dialects by pressing the use of the northern "mandarin." But there seems to have been no readiness among the Southerners to employ it.

The immediate need, however, was to excite interest in all cultural matters, and the zeal and enthusiasm of the leaders



effected this somewhat after the old fashion, when the village scholar, in terse comments, would expound ancient wisdom to those who cared to hear. Only now his place would be taken by young men (and women) of many words, interpreting numerous pamphlets on civic virtues, relations with the world, law, hygiene, and science generally. There would be some good from all this, much good perhaps eventually, but knowledge so acquired is apt to be superficial, cock-sure, unbalanced, lacking in sense of proportion, tending to create a conceit having no solid foundation, and peculiarly exasperating to the true Sages. Moreover Young China had not yet escaped from its "half-baked" Darwinism. There was indeed much need to inculcate science and the scientific habit of mind for the practical purposes of material well-being; but its importance was over-stressed, and there was too much tendency to interpret old ethics, and new notions of law, justice and social relations in positive scientific terms, with the result that the true moral basis of character was undermined. It was hardly the right preparation for the "responsible" citizen of the coming "Nationalist" state.

Nevertheless in laying down (it appears in all the Republican Constitutions) that there is to be education for all, Young China has propounded a great goal. It is hoped eventually to have primary education for all, from six to twelve, and two stages of secondary, for those fitted, up to eighteen. But these schemes have not advanced much beyond aspirations. They too wait on politics.

The new Renaissance faced the other social problems. There was the age-old land problem, and also an industrial problem becoming insistent and getting beyond control of the guilds, with the growth of capitalism and an industrial proletariat. Dr. Sun had proposed his socialistic solution, but its consummation lay beyond a very misty horizon. Meanwhile the principles of self-help were more immediately practicable, and followed lines developed in the West. In 1919 a Peasants' Co-operative Movement started, with a Bank in the secure precincts of Shanghai, and there had been some development of Credit Societies and Farmers Banks. In the same year a Trade Union movement began, and by 1929 had advanced sufficiently to merit legislative attention. The new conceptions of social justice also followed



modern western lines in proposing freedom and equal status for women—the richest reform of all.

Generally there was to be improvement in the conditions of the masses, material and cultural, with a closer social bond between all sections, so that a renewed pride in a revived Chinese civilization might form the basis of a healthy Nationalism.

This is good. Nor should the sympathetic foreigner complain too much if nationalistic aspects have at times been over-exaggerated. China needs Nationalism. If the early stages exhibit, inevitably though unnecessarily, anti-foreign tendencies, such will die down once unity, security and equality have been achieved. But the path to them will be long, and patience has not been an attribute of Young China.

The Washington compromises did not satisfy aspiring Nationalism. Before the Treaties were signed the Republicans of the South had decided to break with Wu Pei-fu whom it had helped to set up in 1920. The Anfu seized the chance of recovering power, and this time received the support of Manchurian Chang. A new civil war raged throughout 1922 and Chang again declared the independence of Manchuria, whilst in Canton faction caused the overthrow of Dr. Sun, who fled to the usual sanctuary of Shanghai.

Then into the midst of this confusion came Soviet Russia with her peculiar stimulus. Till 1922 Soviet official relations with China had been confined to the Declaration of 1917, and some more explicit amplifications in 1919 and 1920, whereby Russia offered the voiding of previous treaties and privileges, required mutual refusal of aid to those fighting against either government, and proposed the restoration of diplomatic relations and a special treaty to settle the future of the C.E.R.

By the end of 1920 the Soviet Government could announce the final crushing of its opponents, and with the victory world-propaganda aims were in the ascendant.

A Chinese Communist Party was inaugurated (at secure Shanghai) in 1921. But Chinese Communism differs considerably from Russian. The latter, of course, is based fundamentally on an urban proletariat, and, according to present theories, the socialization of the peasants is to be accomplished



by large-scale industrialization of agriculture. But before 1927 this development was hardly faced in Russia, and Trotsky's solution of upholding "small" and "middle" peasants was in favour. This was a much more practicable proposition too in China, which lacked an adequate urban proletariat whereon to base a stable system, whilst Chinese peasants were less ready for an industrialized agriculture than even their Russian prototypes seem to be. Thus Chinese Communism has really been an agrarian movement, where, as in the first stages of the Russian Revolution, the small and landless peasants have attacked the large estates, the landlords, and the holders of mortgages and liens, and have instituted petty commonwealths on the basis of evenly distributed holdings from lands and property thus seized. Naturally all classes, continually and increasingly ruined by the disorders of the times, as well as the discharged soldiers, bandits, and outlaws, created by them, and seeking a less precarious habit of living, have found such communities attractive.

The influences of Soviet propaganda were disintegrating in China, and a source of alarm to anti-Communist nations, providing a solid basis for Japan's plea after 1931 that China had not taken the chance offered her at Washington. In 1922 the immediate question was whether Communism (adapted to Chinese circumstances) was to capture the enthusiasm of Young China and the Nationalist Renaissance. As however the putative authority in China was at Peking, where, for a brief interval a liberal "constitutional" Government under Li Yuan-hung had been set up, the Soviet emissary, Joffe, arrived there in August 1922. He proposed that the Declarations of 1919-20 should form the basis of an official *rapprochement*.

But Joffe soon found the Peking atmosphere uncongenial. The Government there was justly concerned about Mongolia, where in 1920 Soviet intervention had led to a fierce internecine struggle, and the establishment at Urga in 1921 of a Red Mongolian Government with Soviet support. Moreover Li, the representative of a precarious Liberalism, feared to be too friendly to the Soviet. His Government demanded the evacuation of Mongolia, and there was a deadlock. Meanwhile the Soviet emissary was encouraged by the news that



the second Congress of the Chinese Communist Party at Shanghai had decided to ally with the Kuomintang, though it was by no means clear how far the latter was anxious for the embrace.

Under these circumstances Joffe moved on to comfortable Shanghai, where he met Sun Yat-sen, and on the 26th January, 1923, the two issued a joint manifesto which assured Soviet sympathy and support for the cause of the unification and independence of China, but justly recognized that prevailing conditions made the Soviet system at present inapplicable to her.

In February, 1923, Sun, armed with this moral support, and perhaps something more solid, returned to Canton, and succeeded in re-establishing his authority. A number of Bolshevist agents under Borodin arrived about the same time, and Dr. Sun proceeded to give a distinctly Soviet tinge to the organization of the Kuomintang. The three Principles of National Independence, Democratic Government and Social Re-organization were indeed re-asserted, but achievement was still awaiting the completion of the military and tutelage stages. A Central Executive Committee, therefore, on the lines of that controlling the Russian Communist Party was set up, to ensure party discipline and unity of action, and direct the training of propagandists and organizers. There was, significantly, to be a military training institute, partly staffed by Russian officers. But the Marxist outlook, with its materialistic and pseudo-scientific interpretations of life and history, though congenial to much that Young China had been imbibing from the West, did not succeed in captivating more than a proportion of the intellectuals, and was therefore a fresh cause of faction and schism.

Meanwhile other reactions of less ultimate importance were apparent.

Throughout the first part of 1923 the liberal-minded Li Yuan-hung at Peking worked for a restoration of constitutionalism on the basis of conciliation and *rapprochement* with the South. But in the new circumstances this was more alarming than ever to the Conservatives and Generals, and fears of Communism aided reaction—not for the first or last time. The end of it was that Li was deposed, and a



“strong” government of the Chihli leaders, Tsao Kun and Wu Pei-fu, set up with the definite intention of crushing out the dangerous manifestations of the South and restoring unity by force. A “permanent” Constitution was promulgated in October. It was Liberal, making the Executive responsible to a Parliament of two Houses, but has, of course, never been implemented. In December 1923 Wu Pei-fu was reported to have purchased the Southern Fleet (with Admiral) and from January of the following year a virtual state of war may be said to have existed between North and South till September 1928.

In that month (January 1924) the Kuomintang at Canton announced a reconstruction of the Party. Peasants and workers were to be organized in membership groups, but class warfare was rejected. The Army was to be on Soviet lines. In March the first National Congress of the Kuomintang accepted the proposals with some dubiety. Chinese Communists were to be admitted to the Party, but were not to take steps to forward a “proletarian revolution.” The signs of dissension showed through the cracks in the compromise, but a show of unity was necessary for the coming conflict. For the rest, Young China counted on the erratic personality of Feng Yu-hsiang, the “Christian General,” who had been attracted by the idealistic appeal of Communism, and was proposing a colonization scheme in Chahar in Inner Mongolia on Chinese Communist lines. His forces took the assertive title of Kuominchun or National Army, and were favourably situated to threaten the rear of the Chihli Tuchuns. Another factor was Chang Tso-lin, who was certainly not Communist, but partly in his own interests, and partly through Japanese encouragement, was opposed to the “strong” centralizing policy of the Chihli, and was now definitely with the Anfu. There was probably also some personal antipathy between him and Wu Pei-fu who had defeated him in 1922. Of other groups we need only mention Yen Hsi-shan, the “Model Tuchun” of Shansi, who, for a time, kept his province clear of the struggle.

Thus the stage was set for the new and pregnant phase of the Chinese Revolution.



# BOOK VII

## NATIONALISM

CHAPTER XXVIII. NORTH AND SOUTH

CHAPTER XXIX. THE CONFLICT WITH COMMUNISM

CHAPTER XXX. THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER XXXI. THE OUTLYING LANDS





## CHAPTER XXVIII

### NORTH AND SOUTH

APART from certain incalculable personal factors the key to the situation as it developed in the next four years lies in the relations between the two wings of the Southern Nationalists and their reactions on the Northern groups.

When Red influences seemed to be slackening, or dissensions in the South paralysed any immediate danger from there, the power of the Anfu increased. When the Red menace loomed great, unity and strength was the demand in the North. The particularist interests of Chang Tso-lin made him a supporter of the Anfu, but he was also anti-Communist, and the two policies were not always compatible. Japan, anti-Communist too, was chiefly concerned to keep Manchuria out of the internecine struggle, and anxious to maintain commercial relations with China Proper, and here again it was difficult for policy to be consistent. In the South, the rival factions met Northern threats by efforts to compromise.

In the early part of 1924, there was a lull whilst preparations for the coming struggle went on. During this period, whilst Russian officers were training the Southern forces, the Soviet Government negotiated the famous Agreement of the 31st May, 1924, with the Chihli Government at Peking. Under it diplomatic and consular relations between the Soviet and China were to be restored. The Soviet exhibited a most conciliatory spirit, agreeing to annul all treaties, and replace them as necessary by others that did not derogate from the sovereign rights of China. Concessions, privileges, Boxer indemnities, and extra-territorial rights were all renounced. Outer Mongolia was recognized an integral part of China. There was to be mutual renunciation of propaganda by both Governments.

The whole question of the C.E.R. was to be settled by friendly negotiation, and meanwhile a Provisional Agreement was made. It recognized the purely commercial character



of the enterprise. All matters of political administration were definitely conferred on the Chinese. For railway administration there was to be a joint Board of ten (five Russians and five Chinese) with a Chinese Director-General. The manager was to be Russian. Generally employment was to be evenly distributed between the two nationalities, and the concern to be run on a basis of friendly co-operation. The Soviet agreed to be responsible for claims of shareholders incurred before the 9th March, 1917.

This was well enough, but it ignored the "independence" of Chang Tso-lin. That "Tuchun" however was ready to acquiesce, but as a mark of his independence required a separate Agreement, which was duly signed on the 20th September, 1924. It followed the general lines of the May Agreement, but reduced the period of the lease from eighty to sixty years (1963), and reaffirmed the right of previous redemption. There was to be a revision of the contract of 1896, but this was never carried out and the omission furnished excuses for some of Chang's later arbitrary action.

With the signing of the May Treaty, and the acceptance of Karakhan as Soviet Ambassador at Peking, in July, 1924, the Russians officially regulated their relations with China, but unofficial propaganda, looked on as missionary enterprise, was held to be unaffected. As with other missionary enterprise, however, it was not always easy to draw the line between unofficial and official activities. But the "unofficial" missionaries were, after all, at Canton by invitation; Russia had not forced them on China, and, as a matter of fact, when they were expelled did not intervene.

The lull of 1924 ended with a local quarrel that broke out in September between the rival Tuchuns, Anfu and Chihli, of the Provinces lying respectively North and South of the Yangtze estuary. This brought in Chang Tso-lin to support the Anfu, whilst Dr. Sun's forces moved North, though not very far. Feng Yu-hsiang, however, seized the opportunity, in the name of Nationalism, to attack the weakened Chihli, and was thus in uncongenial alliance with the Manchurian "war-lord."

In October, 1924, accordingly, Feng and his National Army occupied Peking, expelled the Chihli government, and sub-



sequently defeated Wu Pei-fu, who fled to the middle Yangtze. The Anfu under their old leader, Tuan Chi-jui, were restored with the acquiescence of Chang, and before the end of January, 1925, the last Chihli adherent had been crushed. In the previous November, Tuan, installed as Chief Executive, had made the rather hopeless proposition of a Conference for Union.

Dr. Sun, who had been on a propaganda visit to Japan, responded by arriving at Peking on the 31st December, 1924.

But, meanwhile, the weakening of the North had encouraged renewed dissensions between "Reds" and "anti-Reds" at Canton. Dr. Sun's moderating influence was being steadily undermined, and his authority assumed by the Soviet agents.

It was to be restored in tragic fashion, for on the 12th March, 1925, Sun Yat-sen died at Peking at the age of 59. But the authority death can give is not usually helpful for the solution of immediate problems, and this was particularly so with one whose practical proposals were nebulous and changeable. Nevertheless, Sun Yat-sen provided the guiding ideas—Nationalism, Democracy, Socialism—which Nationalist China is still trying to realise, and Chinese patriotism acclaims him the modern successor of the Great Teachers. He left, however, a sufficiently tangled skein.

The unofficial Soviet propagandists were successfully organizing the peasants of the middle regions, and such bodies as "Red Spears," and "Heavenly Gatemen," began to appear for the taking over of land, and setting up of Communist communities. It was not always easy for the harassed property owner to distinguish these enthusiasts from ordinary bandits. Moderate opinion, however, still exhibited its independence, and a National Labour Conference at Canton, in the first week of May, made reasoned proposals for unity of classes, arbitration in labour disputes, and the opening of relations with Labour organizations in other countries. In Yunnan a strong anti-Red movement began to develop.

But Communist propaganda had, of course, fanned the anti-foreign spark in the Nationalist movement, and when, in that same May, 1925, industrial unrest at Shanghai led to bloodshed and riots, and the police, after warning, fired on a student-led mob trying to seize the police-station, and killed



several, it burst into flame. For several months there was a continual repetition of anti-foreign demonstration, strike and boycott. In June the Northern Government sent 2,000 troops under Chang's son, Chang Hsueh-liang, to help restore order in Shanghai.

Military and Conservative North, indeed, was more concerned about Communism than foreigners. The chief complaints were about the weakness of the Anfu Government's attempts to suppress the former, and for reported negotiations with the dubious Feng, hovering about the Nankow Pass in the Great Wall, North West of Peking.

At Canton, meanwhile, the struggle between Red and Moderates went on uncertainly. On the 20th August, 1925, Chiang Kai-shek (born 1886), a former secretary of Dr. Sun, and husband to Mme. Sun's sister, who henceforth claimed to be his late master's successor, assumed power at Canton. His aim then was a compromise for union of the two sections, and Borodin remained at his right hand. But the chasm proved unbridgeable, and the alliance lasted little more than six months.

Chang Tso-lin's Anfu sympathies were soon weakened by his fears of a possible Communist triumph in the South, and Wu Pei-fu, declaiming too against the Anfu, opened negotiations with Chang, who was, however, also listening to the different views of Feng. But the latter's idealism was not to Chang's way of thinking. The two broke into open quarrel, and whilst Feng led his National Army down from the Nankow Pass, Wu Pei-fu sent forces against him. Feng meanwhile had undermined the loyalty of Chang's chief general, Kuo Sung-ling. The latter had socialistic sympathies, and was moved by appeals to end the civil war by the elimination of Chang.

Then Japan intervened, and her Government issued (December, 1925) its Declaration of a neutral zone along the S.M.R., thus barring Kuo's way to Mukden. The delay enabled Chang, in spite of some obstructions by the Soviet managers of the C.E.R., to bring up reinforcements. Kuo was crushed, and Feng and Chang stood facing one another, the former holding the line of the Tientsin railway from Taku to Peking. In February, 1926, Wu Pei-fu came to terms with Chang, and began to move North, in spite of the



proclamation against him of the Anfu Government at Peking.

With the threat from the discordant North removed, faction revived at Canton. At the Second Congress of the Kuomintang, in January, 1926, there were 168 Left Representatives to 110 of Right and Centre, and a Resolution was carried urging alliance with the Soviet for undermining Imperialism. The news of it doubtless hastened the conclusion of the alliance between Wu and Chang, and their determination to eliminate Feng, now established at Peking.

The alliance soon proved effective. Early in March Feng's forces were driven from Taku—known in Anglo-Chinese wars—and began to fall back on Peking. Tientsin was occupied by the allied Manchurian and Chihli troops on the 22nd March.

The reaction on Canton was immediate. Probably Chiang Kai-shek was becoming disillusioned with Communism, and seeking an excuse for breaking with anyhow the more extreme elements. On the 20th March, 1926, two days before the fall of Tientsin, he and his supporters ordered the expulsion of the Russians and the chief Communist leaders. But the position was difficult, for the South could not afford to weaken itself by a complete schism and the elimination of its most vigorous elements, and a curious, hesitating see-saw policy went on, whilst uncertainty where the balance of advantage lay remained.

Calculations were complicated by the dramatic success of the Allies against the erratic Feng. Before March was out the "National Army" was in full retreat, and Feng himself withdrew to Russia to study Communism at closer quarters. On the 11th April the Anfu leader, Tuan Chi-jui, was deposed, and four days later the National Army evacuated Peking which was entered by the allied forces. Chang Tso-lin himself arrived at Peking in the following June, where he met Wu, and arrangements were made for a final attack on the Kuominchun, holding the Nankow Pass, preparatory to the long-delayed unifying campaign against the South.

Chiang Kai-shek diplomatically reversed his action of the previous March, and the final decision against Communism was postponed. On the 15th May his more extreme anti-Red supporters were removed from the Executive of the Kuomintang, and the Communists and their Russian officers reinstated



in the Party. The preparation for the counter-unifying expedition from the South were resumed in earnest. It was time if the Kuominchun was to be saved.

On the 10th July the Peking Allies began their general attack on it at the Nankow Pass. Two days later the Southerners were at Changsha where the route from the Meiling Pass through the northern frontier range of the Kwangs runs to Hankow. In August news that the Kuominchun line was breaking roused the South to renewed efforts, and on the 25th the Cantonese entered Yo-chow, less than 150 miles by road from Hankow, whilst the "National Army" was reported holding the hills West of Peking.

The real military stage of Dr. Sun's aspirations had begun, and Wu Pei-fu was moving South, not to conquer, but to defend.

It was too late. The great city of Hankow fell on the 7th September, and the Northerners were in retreat, whilst the Cantonese were moving down the Yangtze. The regrettable clashes with the foreign communities began, but, undoubtedly, the chief excesses were due to Communist extremists.

And now, with immediate danger from the North removed, the authentic struggle between Red and anti-Red for the control of the Nationalist movement was resumed. In the North, indeed, the alarmed militarists accepted the leadership of Chang Tso-lin, who joined their forces into a Country-Tranquillising-Army (Ankuochun), but they were henceforth really on the defensive, with the Kuominchun active still on their flank.

At the end of December the Nationalists set up a Government at Hankow, proclaimed on the 1st January, 1927, the Capital of China. Two days later the British were expelled from their Concession, and the menace to all foreign interests along the Yangtze Valley became serious. The British Government indeed, had, on the 18th December, 1926, issued a conciliatory declaration renouncing the idea of foreign tutelage over China. This amounted almost to a recognition of the Kuomintang, and approval of its aims. It probably helped to widen the split between the violently anti-foreign Reds and the Moderates of the Party, who, though pressing the old claims for equal status, hoped for



friendly agreement and future co-operation with the foreign powers.

There was proclamation against attacks on foreigners on the 6th January, but it was followed by anti-foreign outrages, and, with the menace increasing, the British Government, on the 26th January, 1927, began to despatch the Shanghai Defence Force. Whilst it was on its way, however, the Chen-O'Mally negotiations and agreement emphasized again the conciliatory attitude of the British Government by proposals for renouncing or regulating the Concessions to permit a Chinese share in their control.

Unfortunately there were further incidents at Nanking after its fall to the Cantonese on the 24th May (the anniversary of the T'ai-p'ing entry), at Shanghai, and Hankow, necessitating military action by the British. On the whole, considering the nature of the movement and the circumstances, it must be admitted that the loss of foreign life was small, but it would certainly have been much greater if that military action had not been taken.

With the fall of Nanking the conquest of the South could be considered completed, and preparations were made for the final advance on Peking. But that fundamental conflict within the Kuomintang had first to be decided. Red influences were centring at Hankow, whilst the moderate Republicans were at Nanking, and by April matters had come to a head.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE CONFLICT WITH COMMUNISM

WHILST the cleavage between Red and anti-Red in the South grew wider, the Nationalist forces were advancing northwards over the Great Plain. But the Peking authorities naturally made the most of the "Red Scare," and their position grew stronger in spite of the menace of the incalculable Feng, who had returned from Moscow, on their Western flank. As part of the Northern anti-Red move there was a raid on the Soviet Embassy at Peking on the 6th April, 1927, and the Government announced evidence of a desire to Bolshevize China, and stir up an anti-foreign agitation to conclude in a general massacre. It was hardly necessary to raid an Embassy to secure evidence of the Bolshevizing desire, but the Soviet naturally repudiated the accusation of working for a massacre.

However, the announcement was effective, though not quite in the way the Peking Government had intended. There was indeed a rally of the Northern troops, and the Southerners were checked at Chinchow, about 100 miles South of Kaifeng. Then on the 11th April the Powers issued an Ultimatum with demands for apology, punishment and reparation for the Nanking incidents. The Demands were accepted by Eugene Chen, the Foreign Minister at Hankow. But these things forced the conclusion of the brewing conflict in the South, with results in the end destructive for the North.

Chiang Kai-shek's opposition to Communism and Russian influence had been steadily reviving, and he judged that the moment had now come to draw the strength of anti-Red sentiment to the side of Nationalism by a fresh, and this time, final declaration against them. Accordingly, towards the middle of April, 1927, Chiang ordered a round-up of Communists at Canton, and the Communist General Labour Union was proscribed. On the 15th the anti-Red leaders at Nanking constituted themselves under Chiang as the true Nationalist Government in rivalry to Hankow. Hankow



threw out a defiance, and to emphasize it proposed a separate campaign up the Hankow-Peking railway, whilst Peking, by executing a number of Communists, retorted on Nanking's claim to be the true anti-Red rallying-point.

During May the Hankow forces advanced North, and after some fighting, confused by intrigue amongst the Northerners, and the intervention of the disconcerting Feng, the Northerners withdrew to the Yellow River and the Grand Canal. Meanwhile, the grave change in Japanese policy had occurred.

Japan had just followed the action of Great Britain in sending a Defence Force to Shanghai. She had also important interests in Shantung and other places. There was a considerable Japanese population at Tsingtau, at Tsinanfu, and along the railway between them. Concern had been growing, and revived the problems faced at Washington. That was five years ago, and now China was split into three major groups and a number of minor ones. Trade was suffering, and Japanese investments in China with it. The whole policy of "friendship" was in jeopardy, and the more forceful arguments of the military party correspondingly strengthened. The unfavourable financial situation, largely due to affairs in China, expressed itself in Japan by a banking crisis, involving some scandal, in the early part of 1927. The opposition to the conciliatory policy of Baron Shidehara increased, and many business men began to support the "positive policy" of the Seiyukai, now led by the dictatorial Baron Tanaka. In that fateful April, 1927, the fall of the Wakatsuki Cabinet declared the growing disillusion, and Baron Tanaka, with a Seiyukai Ministry, became Prime Minister on the 19th April, 1927. But there were still hesitations, and, as the General Election of the 20th February, 1928 (the first in Japan under Manhood Suffrage) showed, opinion was still pretty evenly divided, Seiyukai and Minseito getting practically an equal number of seats. There was even to be a reaction to "friendship," but fresh circumstances produced the final triumph of the "positive policy."

In 1927 the visible expression of the change was the landing of Japanese troops at Tsingtau. The news produced another anti-Japanese boycott.

In June, Chiang Kai-shek, denouncing the Hankow leaders, began a rival and parallel advance against the North, and as



it proceeded along the Pukow-Tientsin railway, the Japanese forces moved to Tsinanfu, the junction with the Tsingtau line. They claimed to be protecting their nationals and interests, but indignant Nanking denounced the action as designed to assist the North. The intention is improbable, but in effect the North got a breathing space whilst its forces withdrew across the Yellow River to rally in Chihli. At the same time Manchurian Chang went to Peking as Commander-in-Chief of all the Northern armies.

It had become clear that there could be no decision until the Kuomintang defined its relations with Communism. The verbal conflict was fought out in the first half of July. Simultaneously negotiations were commenced between Chang at Peking and representatives of the Nanking anti-Red group for an alliance against Communism. This possibility doubtless hastened the discussions in the South. The threat of the introduction of the militarist factor into the Nationalist movement was justly regarded by many as disastrous. Nor was the intervention of the Komintern, when, on the 14th of July, it denounced the anti-Communist movement, and penetratingly accused some of the Hankow leaders of equivocation, soothing to Nationalist feeling. The growing loss of trade was also a forceful argument for a settlement on anti-Communist lines. On the 15th July, 1927, the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang, at Hankow, ordered the exclusion of the Communists, and the Soviet advisers were requested to leave China.

The verbal struggle was ended, but the Communists were still there, and strong enough to resist physically. There were Communist risings in Kiang-si, and forces from Hankow, ignoring the Resolution of the 15th July, began to advance on Nanking. The Northerners seized the occasion to move South again. It was not easy for the Foreign Powers to look on unmoved, but the anti-Communist resolution was thought reassuring, and there was no intervention; the Japanese troops were even withdrawn from Tsinanfu in September.

The confused fighting went on. The Northerners still advanced, and desperate efforts were made to re-unite the Southern sections, leading in August to the dismissal of Chiang, who went to Japan. On the 17th August the Northerners were bombarding Nanking, and operations continued



through September, in which month further confusion was created by the establishment of an independent Nationalist Government at Canton. The reconstituted Nanking Government meanwhile had negotiated a diversion by Yen Hsi-shan (the "Model Tuchun") of Shansi, who was to be helped by the dubious Feng. But the South was in no position to give effective support to Yen, who was crushed in October by Chang Tso-lin and the Ankuochun. The Nationalist position was bad. Nanking decided to recall Chiang Kai-shek and make every effort to implement the July resolution. It was a wise decision, and reached a fortunate conclusion.

On the 12th November, 1927, the Nanking Nationalists captured Hankow, and the following day Chiang Kai-shek was restored as head of the Government. But there was now unfortunately Canton, with its separate government and revived particularism, and Communism was strong there. Attempts at union by discussion failed, and on the 11th December, the Canton Communists struck their terrible blow, with rapine, fire and slaughter. But they had overreached themselves. The anti-Communist forces rallied, and in January, 1928, a new re-united Nationalist Government, embracing the moderate Canton leaders was set up with Chiang as Commander-in-Chief of its re-invigorated armies. On the 10th February, 1928, the Kuomintang, after a plenary session at Nanking issued its Manifesto. Communism was repudiated. The campaign against the North was to be completed. Faction was to be repressed, and a reconstructed State, governed by the principles of law, was to demand national independence, and the abolition of unequal treaties.

The date (10th February, 1928) is the turning point, when the July Resolution at last became effective, for though the session was subsequently declared unrepresentative, and Communism is still very much alive, it no longer sits officially at the Council Board of the Kuomintang. The proof of the reality behind the February Manifesto is the rapid and final collapse of the North.

Up till April, 1928, there was confused fighting. In that month a horrible Moslem rising in Kansu brought a reminder of age-long discords. But it was, for expansive China, a local matter, not seriously affecting the main course of events.

Chiang Kai-shek began his advance by the middle of April,



and again the Japanese moved to Tsinanfu. Again the indignant Nationalists declaimed that Japan was aiding the North in the interests of Chinese disunion. There was actual collision with the Japanese forces on the 3rd May, 1928, and the Nationalist Government appealed to the League of Nations. The Japanese action, which is claimed to have saved many Japanese lives, and much property, did cause a brief delay in the Nationalist advance, but it did not save Peking nor Chang Tso-lin. Within a week the Southerners were advancing on Tientsin, supported by the redoubtable Feng on their Western flank. The Northern armies began to retreat on Manchuria, and then Japan intervened again with her famous ultimatum of the 18th May, 1928. It expressed the importance attached by the Japanese Government to the maintenance of peace and order in Manchuria, and bluntly proposed effective steps in any menace to them. (Tanaka, expounding the matter to the Japanese Parliament, explicitly declared that Japan would prevent either defeated troops, or those in pursuit entering Manchuria.)

The Ultimatum was greeted with protests from both the putative governments, of Peking and Nanking. But the end of the former was near. On the 30th May the Nanking forces crossed the Yellow River. On the 3rd June Chang Tso-lin left Peking, to be mortally wounded next day when his train was bombed. On the 3rd July Chiang Kai-shek entered the city.

The seat of government was transferred to Nanking, and the former Tatar camp, losing its proud appellation of "king" (capital) became Pei-p'ing (Peace in the North). Though desultory fighting continued, there seemed to be reality in the name when the Northern armies surrendered on the 21st September, 1928. But the expressed aspiration was to prove vain.

The military stage, however, was declared over. A Government claiming to be "National," was at last established, and was soon to be recognized by the Foreign Powers. But there were still great difficulties. The Moslem revolt was raging in Kansu; the Communists were reasserting themselves in the South; and there was always faction, raising its head over the division of the spoils. Moreover, fresh complications were looming in Manchuria.



## CHAPTER XXX

### THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

THE claim of the new Government to be "National" required the acceptance of its authority by at least a substantial part of China Proper. It would not be vitiated by the defiance of the outlying Lands—Tibet, Mongolia, Sinkiang, or even the great colony of Manchuria. But, though the claim to authority, even in China Proper, be weak, the "National Government" may make another plea. It may be asked to be judged by what it has done, and tried to do, for the happiness and uplifting of the people, and the creation of a national spirit.

A good start in re-organization was made in the proposals of the Economic Conference of the Kuomintang at Shanghai from the 20th-28th June, 1928. The repudiation of Communism was confirmed by arrangements for meeting loan-services. Proposals for railway construction, and thereby the finding of useful employment for soldiers to be now disbanded were put forward. The need for tariff autonomy, currency reform, social legislation, and the solution of growing land and labour problems was emphasized.

To give practical effect to these things a new Constitution was drawn up at the plenary session of the Kuomintang in August, and was promulgated on the 4th October. It was professedly provisional, and based on Dr. Sun's principle of "tutelage."

Under it the five functions of government are exercised by the Five Boards (Yuan)—Administrative, Legislative, Judicial, Supervisory, and Examining. Their Chairmen, augmented by a certain number of State Councillors chosen by the Kuomintang, form a Government Conference, whose duty is to formulate policy. It has a Standing Committee. The actual administration is carried out by ten Ministries (Foreign, Finance, War, Agriculture, Industry, Education, Railways, Interior, Communications and Posts, Health). For co-ordination the Heads of the Ministries, and the Chairmen of the



Five Yuan, sit together in an Administrative Conference.

Each Province was to have local government constructed on similar lines.

But over all sit, in another "Conference," the representatives of the Party having general direction and control. It is argued, however, that the capacity of the Chinese for the full privileges and responsibilities of democracy can be tested within the limits of the Party, whose organization, in theory, provides for the democratic selection of leaders.

Democracy—even within the limits of a Party—is always a difficult thing to work. A party organization does inculcate the habit of working together, but the general agreement on larger principles implied by it, especially when there is no rival opposition, seems only to clear the way for those petty internecine quarrels and personal jealousies that have long been the despair of the Sages. In China, too, inveterate particularism soon raised its head again. The Party organization properly provided for local associations and Branch Councils (Tang Pu). They raise their own funds, and, making excessive claims to independence, have continuously exhibited lack of discipline and readiness to dispute with Headquarters. This would be a wholesome sign if conflicts had been over high principles. Usually they seem to have centred round personalities, and the more sordid ambitions of careerists. Moreover, the "Tang Pu" sometimes became the tools of selfish militarists and Tuchuns who played on their particularism for personal ends. Other complications arose from the Unions formed by Students, and Labour. The former were doctrinaire, the latter had their own interests, and both were insubordinate; but, be it said, the insubordination was often a just and proper defiance of the weak or self-seeking policies of the leaders.

When all is said and done these are the growing pains of Democracy. They are not absent from the crude alternatives proposed in these days, which, indeed, produce more bitter pains without providing for fruitful growth.

Certainly the growing pains in China have been severe. The internal situation throughout 1929 remained very confused. There was faction fighting between Canton and Nanking, whilst the volatile Feng, changing from one side to another, was in May expelled from the Kuomintang, but



recovered agreement with it in June. The accusations mutually levied were favouritism, corruption and militarism, and dissension was not stilled even by the outbreak that year of the Russian embroglio. The Kansu Moslem revolt was quelled by cruel retaliatory massacre.

1930 saw further fighting in the South, and in April the revolt of Yen Hsi-shan of Shansi. He received some support from the embarrassing Feng, but Chang Hsueh-liang, the Young Marshal, came to the aid of Nanking, and Yen was subdued by November, 1930.

That month young Chang met Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking, and a plenary session of the Kuomintang issued a Manifesto proposing re-organization, the eradication of corruption, the suppression of brigandage and Communism, the enforcement of opium suppression, and arrangements for famine relief. A People's Convention was convoked for the following May, 1931.

It duly met, though at an unpropitious hour. Fighting against the Communists had been continuing all the early months that year; the trouble with Japan over Manchuria was coming to a head; and a new revolt had just broken out at Canton, where a separate government under Wang Ching-wei, Chang Fat-kwai, Eugene Chen and Dr. Sun's son, Sun Fo, was set up on the 18th May, 1931.

However, the Convention voted a Provisional Constitution, promulgated the 1st June. It re-affirmed the principle of "tutelage," and followed the general lines of the Constitution of 1928, and promised democratic development upwards from the local organizations, but it gave the nomination to all the chief posts to the President, to which position Chiang Kai-shek was duly elected on the 15th June.

It was a dismal heritage, and the situation was brightened only by the alliance of "young" Chang. Canton was more antagonistic than ever, and was even negotiating with Japan. There was a revolt of a General in the North, in July, soon suppressed, however, by the Mukden forces. The disastrous Yangtze floods came in August, and on September 18th-19th Japan swept into the Manchurian adventure. The one immediate good result for China of this last catastrophe was a proposal from Canton for a Peace Conference which duly met at Shanghai in October-November.



A Concordat was reached under which appointments to the chief posts were to be made by the combined Central Executive Committees of the Nanking and Canton Party Congresses. Chiang Kai-shek resigned the Presidency on the 15th December, and the Cantonese Wang Ching-wei and others took office in the reconstituted Government, though Eugene Chen and Sun Fo resigned the following January at the beginning of the Shanghai affair. A full Congress of the Kuomintang proposed a four-year plan for re-organization, combating of Communism, and directed the setting up of a National Economic Council. On the 27th December, 1931, the neutral Lin Sen was elected President of the Political Council, under the new regime declared established on the 29th.

The real authority, however, remains with the Central Executive Committee of the Party elected in full Congress. It propounds the policy to be formulated by the Political Council. It also elects the Executive body, of which Wang Ching-wei became head. This receives its directions from the Political Council, and passes them on to the appropriate Yuan.

Chiang Kai-shek accepted a subordinate post as Director of Military Affairs, and thus (in theory) the brief authority of a single leader ended, and the principle of a limited democracy was claimed to be preserved.

But unity was still far away. The Reds, so active in 1930, held the First Congress of Chinese Soviets in May that year. It claimed to represent 30 millions of people, and passed resolutions for the abolition of private ownership in land, and the immediate confiscation of large estates, temple and monastery land.

Red methods of giving effect to their principles were crude and drastic enough, and there was much bloodshed and destruction, chiefly in Hunan and Kiangsi. In 1931-32 the Red organization was still further developed. Regular "Government" Congresses of peasants and workers, on Soviet lines, were set up in Kiangsi and Fukien, and minor Soviets appeared in other places. The Congresses, nominally, anyhow, elected Commissars, who directed the different branches of administration on Communist lines, and apparently with some measure of efficiency.

The troubles with Japan in 1931-32 of course, led to much



disorganization, and the diversion of forces and funds from the suppression of Communism and reconstruction. The Government withdrew to Honanfu, where a poorly attended Conference proposed measures to deal with the situation. The Shanghai affair (January-May, 1932) indeed revived the defiant Nationalism of the South, resenting any conciliation with Japan, and in September, 1932, the Cantonese set up a Supreme Court for the S.W. After the return of the National Government to Nanking on the 1st December, 1932, a S.W. Political Council, maintaining an independent attitude towards Nanking was formed at Canton. In the early part of 1933 civil war broke out in Szechwan.

It is unprofitable to dwell too long on these dreary details, but it is necessary to make clear the fundamental political anarchy, even since 1928, before judging whether China has taken the chance accorded in 1922.

But the Government has some constructive achievements to support that other plea to the "National" title.

After the Shanghai Conference of June, 1928, the general work of financial reform was placed in the capable hands of Mr. T. V. Soong (brother of Mmes. Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek). A Budget Committee has been set up, and a regular Budget presented year by year. In spite of wars—internal and external—Army expenses have been cut down. A beginning has been made with the reorganization of the Revenue services. Salt and Customs indeed still remain under capable European direction, but for the rest a single Internal Revenue Administration has been set up with a regular salaried staff. This should eventually strike an effective blow at corruption and "squeeze," and the particularism engendered by Provincial collection and management of general revenue.

One great triumph has been the securing of tariff freedom. So long indeed as arbitrary provincial taxes, like li-kin, existed, and there was no real central control, good reasons for refusing it remained. It was still not easy to abolish li-kin (disguised or not) whilst Tuchuns held control of Provinces, and wanted revenue for their armies. However, in December, 1928, Tariff Treaties were negotiated with the Powers, and, as a first step, an increased tariff was accorded in February, 1929. Effective steps were to be taken to abolish



li-kin. Tariff autonomy was declared effective on the 1st January, 1931.

The new tariff has developed some protective aspects, and there have been large increases in 1933. But it is claimed to be revenue-producing, and extreme protectionism is repudiated. Complaints have been made of a good deal of smuggling now rendered profitable, and of the inevitable li-kin re-appearing in other forms. Obviously difficulties will continue until real unity and loyalty is assured, but revenue has come in. A National Finance Commission, set up in November, 1931, claimed six months later to have arranged a proper system of auditing. At the end of 1932 the Budget was declared balanced, li-kin abolished, and the centralized Revenue Civil Service established. A proof of some reality underlying these claims is the position of Chinese Government loans, but their high standing is chiefly due to their being secured on the Salt and Customs, with their European controllers; and the Chinese Press has been at pains to point out that the "balance" does not take account of illegal exactions and extravagances outside the present control of the Government.

Railway defaults, not surprising, considering internal conditions, complicated by the "World-Crisis," have, moreover, been numerous, and complaints are made of profits being used for the uneconomic hurrying on of other railway construction, including that which incited the Manchurian disaster.

Social legislation shows accomplishment—on paper.

The growing importance of industrial labour was recognized by an Industrial Disputes Law of June, 1928, providing machinery for conciliation and arbitration; whilst a Trade Union Act (October, 1929) recognized the right of association, with certain restrictions to prevent coercion of non-unionists and the use of the strike before the machinery of the Act of 1928 had been resorted to. A Factory Law (in force, 1st August, 1931) forbids employment of children under 14, limits—with exceptions—the regular working day to eight hours, and regulates—also with exceptions—the conditions of work for women and children. It further lays down rules for health and safety on the lines of western industrial legislation.

But with the political problem still unsolved the real



application of these excellent laws cannot be relied on. Nor is it certain yet that inveterate habits of "management" and "compromise" will yield to the precision of rule and regulation.

Similar qualifications must apply to the attempts to deal with the vital land question. A programme in 1930 announces the intention of reforming land tenure, fixing rents, encouraging co-operation, reclamation, and education. These common agricultural aspirations are not easily satisfied, even in settled countries. A law of 1930 set up a Land Bureau for the redistribution and consolidation of strips. In 1931 the National Flood Relief Commission on the Yangtze, with some foreign assistance, did much good work, and exhibited real public spirit amongst its members.

Since July, 1933, the Council of the League of Nations has arranged in agreement with the Chinese Government for providing technical advisers, for health, transit, reclamation, flood control, and so forth. It is a fine effort at international co-operation on the right lines, though the Japanese Government has expressed (24th July, 1933 and April, 1934) uneasiness lest "technical aid," should imply "military preparation."

Accomplishment is indeed not yet great, but in intention, at least, the Government may claim the attribute of "National." Internal obstacles are, however, still enormous, whilst difficulties have been vastly increased by external complications. Whether a China in isolation could have worked out her salvation is not worth inquiring, for an isolated China is not—and never was—a practicable proposition.

China indeed recognized this in her repeated efforts to assert her authority over the Outlying Lands. Their problem had again become insistent, forcing violent contact with the other great factors of East Asian politics—Russia and Japan.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE OUTLYING LANDS

CHINESE claims to lordship over the Outlying Lands depended first on the age-old conception of the intrinsic superiority of Chinese civilization, and its right, therefore, to impose itself on inferior peoples. The other consideration was the internal peace and security of China Proper. Inevitably the new Nationalism was impelled dangerously to reassert these claims.

But Tibetans, Mongols and Turks are also developing a nationalism of their own, preferring their own ways and resenting exploitation ; whilst if their fitness for independence is denied, other nations, with a better right than a China unable to find herself, may claim the ordering of their destinies.

Tibet has effectively secured a virtual independence, but the poor economic attraction of that dreary land renders her unimportant to the larger aspects of Asian politics.

Sinkiang remains, as always, a wild land, confused by the racial and religious differences of Tungans (Chinese Moslems), Turks and Mongols. It has been perennially rebellious, and the latest outbreaks of April, 1933, are not yet quelled. As recently as February, 1934, Great Britain protested over an attack on her Consulate at Kashgar, and has been duly accused, in the Chinese Press, of intrigue. But obviously China has small claims, moral or political, to sovereignty. She has not raised the condition of the people, nor been able to win their loyalty or maintain order. Her security will be better served by attention to her internal problems.

Mongolia is more important. It is the land-bridge between China and the vast Soviet Empire, and has economic possibilities of its own, uncertain, but interesting in days when unexploited areas are becoming harder to find.

Soviet Russia, indeed, had shown her concern for the land, and though the Chinese restored some measure of authority in 1920, unrest continued. In the following year the Mongols, with the aid of Ungern's "Whites," proclaimed independence



again under the head of the Mongolian Buddhist Church, the "Living Buddha." The Russian "Reds" intervened, and there was a good deal of fighting, whilst the Chinese vainly protested. In May, 1924 (the month when Russia renewed relations with China, acknowledging the latter's sovereignty over Mongolia) the "Living Buddha" died, and the Mongols proclaimed a Republic and drew up a Constitution. A good deal has been done to give reality to it, by education and economic development, mainly under Russian direction, but who will ultimately control the destinies of the land of Jenghiz Khan remains doubtful.

The way from Russia is clear, and China reaches it easily too, by the Kalgan Pass, and the Inner Mongolian province of Chahar, where, till lately, the adventurous Feng was carrying out his Communist experiments. For Japan the way lies through Manchuria, and that other district of Inner Mongolia, Jehol.

Manchuria thus has double significance, in virtue of its own resources, and as the key to the Mongolian lands. It had become more than ever a Chinese colony, but the attempt, first begun in 1907, to assimilate its administration to that of China Proper had never matured.

Economic possibilities are as yet uncertain, but that they are great is evidenced by the continual and rapid growth of the population. The seventeen millions of 1907 had grown to thirty millions by 1933, over 90% Chinese, for the Japanese, who had acquired the right of settlement in 1915, had taken small advantage of it, numbers in 1932 being estimated at about one million, of whom 800,000 were Koreans. But this was not inimical to the "industrial policy," mainly concerned for food, raw materials, and markets. Deposits of coal and iron were being discovered, and the cultivation of the soya bean enormously extended. The latter provides the basis of various foods, and oils useful in manufacture, and the refuse is a valuable fertilizer for the rice-fields of Japan. (In 1927 the bean and its derivatives provided 40 per cent. of the exports from Dairen).

For practical purposes the question of sovereignty was in abeyance, pending the establishment of a really national government in China, and Japan's policy required no more than abstention from China's civil wars, and from too great



expenditure on military preparations. There was some trouble over discontented Koreans in Manchuria. Koreans, as Japanese subjects, had the right of settlement there, and many took the opportunity to go to Manchuria to conduct anti-Japanese agitation. This matter was, however, amicably settled in July, 1925, when the Manchurian authorities agreed to suppress Korean "Societies," and turn over "bad characters" to the Japanese.

The situation was, of course, further complicated by the Russian interests centring round the C.E.R. and Vladivostok.

Following the settlement with China, the Soviet sought a *modus vivendi* with Japan, and a Convention was signed on the 20th January, 1925, under which diplomatic relations were resumed, and, amongst other things, the Treaty of Portsmouth was recognized to be still in force, China making an ineffectual protest.

Soon, however, the fundamental clash of interests produced fresh discords. Japan's action in December, 1925, had been helpful to Chang Tso-lin, but that of the Russian C.E.R. managers the reverse. Chang, too, had now definitely committed himself to intervention in China, and his quarrel with the C.E.R. management set him on a path of independent railway construction inimical to the interests of the S.M.R. Thus there were two clear causes of friction with Japan.

For the moment the quarrel with the Russians was most in evidence. In January, 1926, trains on the C.E.R. were seized, and the Russian manager arrested. The Soviet Government protested by ultimatum to Peking, and Chang, his hands full with the prospective campaign in alliance with Wu Pei-fu, gave way, and the quarrel was patched up, whilst the struggle in China between North and South fought itself out.

The defeat and death of Chang, and the establishment of the National Government in China, were followed by a gathering of notables in Manchuria, who elected Chang's son, Chang Hsueh-liang, the "Young Marshal," to succeed his father, but young Chang, in December, 1928, renounced the policy of independence, and declared his adherence to the National Government.

But in Japan the better prospects in China strengthened the reaction against the "positive policy" of Tanaka in the



interests of peaceful and profitable commercial relations. Tanaka's re-affirmation of Japanese interests in Manchuria, following young Chang's declaration of allegiance to Nanking, was severely criticised by Baron Shidehara. Tanaka began to display hesitation, and angered his own party by agreeing, in March, to withdraw from Shantung within two months, subject to Chinese guarantees for the safety of Japanese subjects; and by appearing to support a report blaming military officers for the death of Chang Tso-lin. The withdrawal from Shantung duly took place on the 20th May, 1929. On the 30th June, Tanaka resigned, and was succeeded by Hamaguchi of the Minseito, with Baron Shidehara as Foreign Minister. The policy of "friendship" with China was re-affirmed, and received sanction at the General Election of February, 1930, when the Minseito secured 273 seats to 174 for the Seiyukai. The latter, though beaten, still expressed dubiety about the "policy of friendship" and expected an opportunity to reverse it.

Their expectations were not disappointed.

It would have been wiser for the new National Government in China, its hands full enough in China Proper, to have left the Manchurian situation alone, anyhow for the time, and accepted the tacit *modus vivendi* with Japan, under the comparatively favourable conditions created by the advent of the Minseito to power.

As things were, China, subject to Japanese rights of exploitation and settlement, still retained, in the eyes of the world, her nominal sovereignty over her colony. If the Chinese Government had succeeded in establishing a real order in China Proper, it might well have made the nominal sovereignty a reality. Many of the new inhabitants, indeed, had abandoned anarchical China, but with better prospects there, might be expected to prefer "easy" Chinese ways to rigid Japanese discipline and efficiency. Similar considerations would apply to the descendants of the ancient Liaoning colonists, and even to the remnants of the Tatars, and the less reputable brigand elements!

The challenge to the Japanese claims for partial control of the economic exploitation of Manchuria, first flung down by Chang Tso-lin, was rashly resumed by the National Government, and Chang's successor, the Young Marshal. Briefly



it proposed, by independent railway development, by rate-cutting, and by the construction at Hulutao on the Liaotung Gulf, of a port to rival Dairen, to draw away the wealth of Manchuria from its passage by the S.M.R. and Dairen to Japan, down to China herself, for her industrial development. But Japan could justly argue that such wealth going to disordered China would merely be wasted, and this aspect of the National Policy of China united both the industrial and imperialist interests in Japan against her.

The motives inducing the National Government to embark on this unhappy course can be appreciated. There was the age-old connection between Manchuria and China, and the great influx of Chinese there in recent years. There was consideration for China's growing industrial ambitions, and recognition that Manchuria held the key to continued control of the great Mongolian lands. A reassertion of authority in the land so nearly lost to Russia before 1905 would strengthen the Government's "National" claims, and there may have been some Bismarckian conception of uniting China through the stimulus of a national war against the victor of 1894-95.

The first clash, however, was with Russia.

Trouble was brewing again in 1929, with China's internal situation confused, and complicated by Communist activities. On the 27th May the Manchurian authorities raided the Soviet Consulates at Harbin and other places on the C.E.R. on a charge of Communist propaganda. There was an interchange of protests, and then, in July, the Chinese went further, taking over the telegraph and telephone system on the C.E.R., seizing the Russian river vessels, arresting officials, and ordering the closing down of Soviet and Trade Union offices. The action was distinctly high-handed, but both sides ominously emphasized their peaceable intentions. Fighting accordingly began in August with an attack by the Russians on the advancing Chinese forces, but the National Government's policy certainly did not unite China against a common foe. On the contrary it produced a fresh revolt at Canton, supported by the undisbanded Kuominchun of General Feng, against the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek; and, whilst all was confusion South and North of the Yangtze, the Soviet forces were attacking Manchuli, where the C.E.R. first crosses from Siberia into the Manchurian province of



Heilungkiang. It was captured in November, whilst fighting was still going on in China Proper. The National forces began to mutiny. The folly of the thing became manifest, and after a truce and preliminary agreement, a Protocol of Peace was signed at Habarovsk on the 22nd December, 1929. It arranged for the restoration of the status quo on the railway, whilst a full settlement was to be reached in a subsequent peaceful conference.

That settlement was never made, and other events have made it superfluous. The National Government had but succeeded in displaying its internal and external weakness to Japan and the world.

Meanwhile the rate-war against the S.M.R. and its subsidiaries went on through 1929, and in December there were signs of increased friction in the refusal of the Nanking Government to receive as Japanese Minister a member of the Cabinet of the "21 Demands" of 1915, with the result that diplomatic relations were broken off. In February, 1930, work was resumed on Hulutao but in May a three-year tariff agreement, conceding favourable terms to Japan, gave satisfaction to the industrialists there. Fighting, however, in China was almost continuous that year, and on into 1931, lending added weight to the Japanese argument that Manchurian wealth sent to China would be wealth thrown away, and that Communism was a substantial danger.

In January, 1931, Baron Shidehara, in the Japanese Diet, gave guarded expression to his Government's views: "We have no intention," he said, "of seeking unfair or selfish terms, nor can it be believed that China . . . harbours a design to reduce the S.M.R. to ruin. But . . ."

The rash challenge to Japanese interests was rallying the more aggressive forces in Japan, and creating even amongst the industrialists a demand for a return to the "positive policy."

It was for Japan, the aggrieved Power, to place the growing dispute before the League of Nations or consult with the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty. That she did not do so is attributed to her growing feeling—rather confirmed by subsequent events—that she would not find proper understanding nor sympathy. Nevertheless, the failure to fulfil her obligations must be regretted.



Events moved swiftly to a crisis. There was a conflict over water-rights at a village, Wanpaoshan, near Changchun, in South Manchuria, between Korean settlers (Japanese subjects) and Chinese farmers, with a consequent intervention by Japanese railway guards and Chinese soldiers, resulting in the eviction of the Koreans, though apparently without casualties. Anti-Chinese demonstrations in Korea, resulting in bloodshed, followed.

The Japanese Government, still conciliatory, expressed regret for these last occurrences, and offered compensation (£15,000) ; but the Nanking Government, in a series of Notes, demanded punishment of officials, apology, acceptance of formal responsibility by Japan, permanent removal of the settlers from Wanpaoshan, and formal guarantees for the future. It was an impossible attitude, exasperating to the high-strung spirit of the Samurai, who could forcefully attribute sordid commercial motives to the still conciliatory attitude of their bourgeois government. Then, in this heated atmosphere came the news of the murder of Captain Nakamura, a Japanese Staff Officer, travelling with a passport. The Chinese declare him a spy, but, as there was no semblance of a trial, "murder" must stand.

There can be little doubt that after the Nanking Notes of July (to which the Japanese made no reply) the military party in Japan, and perhaps the Government too, considered that Chinese action had brought about a virtual state of war. At least the swift action on the 18th-19th September, when the Japanese railway guards, on the plea of damage to the railway, seized the Mukden barracks ; and the subsequent rapid occupation of salient points in the whole vast territory ; argue preparation for the inevitable.

China appealed to the League, which after showing too great readiness to assume the guilt of Japan wisely appointed the Lytton Commission to explore the real facts. Its Report was published on the 1st October, 1932.

Meanwhile in Japan the people swung over to the military view, and showed readiness to stand united against the world, if need were ; whilst both great Parties declared their adherence to what had now become a national cause. In the circumstances, however, the military, at first claimed authority. Proposals for a Coalition fell through. Financial interests



became dissatisfied with the Government currency policy in the World-Crisis, and in December, 1931, the Minseito Cabinet gave way to the Seiyukai. The new Ministry took office just in time to meet the situation created at Shanghai.

The virtual state of war had led to the Chinese employing the boycott weapon there, with riots, and great danger to the large Japanese population, and indeed all foreigners, outside the Settlement. Nor could those inside feel entirely safe when 25,000 Chinese troops gathered in the outlying districts. The Japanese sent an expeditionary force to re-inforce the Shanghai garrison; an ultimatum followed on the 20th January, 1932. The Chinese authorities were apparently willing to accept, but there were accusations of bad faith, and fighting broke out on the night of the 28th. It went on intermittently until the 5th May, when the Armistice was signed. The Japanese Expeditionary Force withdrew on the 31st May. Fighting had been severe, and the civil population suffered much; whilst the Cantonese divisions surprised observers, and themselves, by their stout resistance; but Japanese mobility and efficiency were too much for them.

China (29th January) again appealed to the League, which appointed the Committee of Nineteen to deal with the matter. After the Shanghai armistice it was given the larger Manchurian Question to solve.

That question, however, had begun to settle itself.

On the 18th February the independence of the Manchurian Provinces and Jehol was proclaimed. The Organic Law of the 9th March, 1932, set up a Constitution for them united as Manchukuo, under the headship of the ex-Manchu emperor, now plain Mr. P'u. It was to be frankly under the tutelage of Japan.

In that country the General Election of the 20th February, 1932, in the midst of all this excitement, gave some 300 seats to the Seiyukai, against 149 for the Minseito, but by May the situation brought about the setting up of a National Government under Viscount Saito, expressive of the now "united front." It announced a policy of peace with China, but a determination to uphold the independence of Manchukuo. The determination was reaffirmed by the Protocol of the 15th September, 1932. By it Japan recognized the independence of Manchukuo, and the two States mutually agreed to



protect one another's territories. For the national security of both countries Japanese troops were to be stationed in Manchukuo.

After this the recommendations of the Lytton Report, most valuable in its record of facts, seemed somewhat academic. Its judgment found that the Chinese had been provocative, and recognized that conditions in China had made negotiations difficult. But world public opinion seemed less impressed by these points than by the statements that the Japanese military action in September was not legitimate self-defence though the officers on the spot might have thought so ; and that the new State was not really favoured by its Chinese population, who regarded it merely as an instrument of the Japanese.

The Japanese, of course, maintain that their action was justified, by both the immediate and previous provocation ; and that the Manchurian population welcomes the prospect of peace and efficient government under Japanese tutelage.

Final judgment must be deferred, for no practicable means exist for getting a reliable expression of opinion. Few, if asked for it, could appreciate the real issues, and many would not know themselves what they really wanted.

However this may be, the stern facts are that the Nanking Government cannot drive the Japanese out of Manchukuo, and the suggestion of the Lytton Report for an autonomous Manchuria, with security for Japanese rights and the maintenance of Chinese sovereignty, is not practical politics.

The Nanking Government, indeed, showed no disposition to fight for Manchuria, but it did make an effort to hold Jehol. Fighting consequently began there in January 1933. The winter campaign of the combined Japanese and Manchukuo forces was swift and conclusive. Jehol City fell on the 4th March, and by the 20th the Chinese were in retreat from the Great Wall. There was the usual vacillation amongst the Chinese leaders, and some went over to Manchukuo. Renewed efforts by the Chinese to recover the passes of the Great Wall led to the Japanese invasion south of it. The Japanese Government continued to declare this action purely defensive, to be maintained only during Chinese attempts to recover Jehol. The Nanking Government eventually recognized the facts of the military situation, and an armistice was



concluded at Tangku on the 31st May, 1933, under which Japan agreed to withdraw to the north of the Great Wall. The withdrawal was announced as effected on the 8th August, but was apparently not complete, and dissension continues about the handing over of the passes.

Meanwhile there were protests against Nanking's pusillanimity from Canton, and General Feng, justly concerned for his Chahar settlements, proposed further resistance. But he got little support, and during July and August the combined Japanese and Manchukuo forces pressed on to the Southern Khingan Mountains, whose passes held the key to Chahar, and Outer Mongolia, far beyond. On the 4th August, 1933, the disillusioned Feng passed through Peking on his way to the Sacred Mountain of Shantung, to meditate there on that elusive Secret of the Great Tao.

In November Mr. Soong, dissatisfied also with the Government's proposals for achieving normality in Sino-Japanese relations, resigned and Mr. Kung took his place at the Finance Ministry. The fruits of the same dissension were exhibited in the revolt of Fukien Province on the 18th November, 1933, not subdued till the surrender of the 19th Army (of Shanghai fame) on the 28th January, 1934. On the 1st March, 1934, the elevation of P'u-yi to the throne of Manchukuo, seemed to confirm a certain reaction in Japan against the militarists, become noticeable since the recognition of the U.S.S.R. by the U.S.A. on the 17th November, 1933.

But truly the tangle is one to tax the wisdom of all the Sages ; and since our story has now run down the centuries to reach the advancing PRESENT, we, too, like the perplexed Feng, must ponder a moment the problems of the FUTURE.

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# BOOK VIII

THE FUTURE





## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE FUTURE

#### WHAT of the Future ?

Is reviving Asia, defiant of the anarchical, frustrated West, to unite under the aggressive inspiration and leadership of Japan, to evolve a great continental culture of its own, in an opposition to the rest of the civilized world culminating in some final world catastrophe ?

It may be so.

But a "Pan-Asian" movement need not be aggressive. A just and proper desire of a people to work out its own destiny need not involve a defiance of other nations similarly seeking to work out theirs. And the Chinese people, in spite of imperialistic ambitions of past rulers, are not fundamentally aggressive. They are democratic, and a true democracy is not aggressive, though it will claim the right to live free of aggression from others, and be prepared to defend that right. And so long as the Chinese retain their democratic spirit, we cannot conceive their becoming either the willing instruments or the slaves of the imperialistic fantasies of others. On the contrary, we would hold it to be the destiny of a democratic China, purged and re-born, to turn the Pan-Asian Movement into a fruitful process, broadening the range of true culture for the good of all mankind. It is a possibility not uncongenial to the aspirations of the Ancient Sage !

The world then should hope to see China remain fundamentally democratic ; but, as we are all coming to realize, a democracy is an extremely difficult thing to work, requiring for success high qualities in the people. It is no use blinking the fact that the Chinese (not alone amongst mankind) lack some of the needed qualities ; that there is something wrong with China, and always has been something wrong ; something deep and fundamental.

Our study will, nevertheless, have convinced us that Chinese ethics do propound, *in theory*, all the fundamentals to give the people the character required for a successful democracy. Yet there has not been success in any adequate



degree. The Chinese people must do better than they have done.

In some of the new, shallow, frothy, political theories of the West there is a suggestion that a Democracy will not recognize, or is indifferent to, Leadership. This is, of course, crude nonsense. The intrinsic virtue of Democracy, indeed, is that it lays on the People the saving virtue of responsibility for producing true leaders, for recognizing and supporting them, for giving them adequate confidence for their tasks, whilst retaining sufficient (and no more) control over them to prevent corruption and tyranny, and to secure redress of grievances.

China has often produced true leaders, men of virtue, ability and broad-mindedness, with an ideal of disinterested service in the true spirit of the Taoist Sage ; but the people, as a whole, have not exhibited the capacity for either recognizing or supporting them ; and, hard though the saying be, this basic failure of Chinese democracy declares that Chinese ethic *in action* has failed to give the Chinese people the CHARACTER necessary to make them worthy of Democracy and its liberties.

We are now at the root of the matter. What then can be done to put fire into that grand old Chinese ethic, to stimulate it to live, not only in the words but in the deeds of the people ?

There must be no return to crude autocracy in any form, open or disguised. Dr. Sun and his school were unquestionably right in insisting on implementing the principle of *responsibility* as a great and essential educative factor.

But, again, the sense of responsibility will not grow adequately without the inspiration of some ideal envisaging ends beyond the concerns of daily life, and the preservation of ordinary human rights and liberties, important though these are.

Does Nationalism provide such an ideal ?

Undoubtedly it helps, and Chinese leaders should do everything possible to inculcate a rational, unaggressive Nationalism, a Nationalism that upholds a pride in one's own country without antagonism towards others—a perfectly possible thing. No legitimate means for doing this should be neglected, and not least amongst them we place the need for China to seek to raise the social status of her military



forces. A militarist China—rather inconceivable—is the last thing to be desired, but the traditional attitude of contempt towards the soldier must inevitably breed a low form of service. On the other hand, the fighting services, given their due meed of honour (and no more), and strictly subordinated to the civil power, can provide, without fear of militarism, as England has shown, a valuable school for the high military virtues of unaggressive patriotism, self-sacrifice, ordered discipline and comradely feeling—things that China needs, but lacks. Admittedly it is never easy to draw the line between the military virtues and militarism, but under present conditions in China there is much of the latter with little of the former!

But we must say at once that any idea of China trying to stimulate the national spirit by a national war for the recovery of Manchuria, or any other of the Outlying Lands, should be put aside. We have shown that China has no moral claim to any of these lands, and bitter though the renunciation may be (as bitter as England's of her great American colonies), she must concentrate on the restoration of her own society before she can presume to control the destinies of colonies or even barbarian peoples.

Meanwhile that task of restoring her own society, and stimulating the old ethic into action, may be sustained by the encouragement of local public activities on the old traditional lines of the self-contained village communities; but the spheres of their activities must be strictly limited, so that the sense of co-operation as parts of a larger whole may be fostered, and inveterate particularism thus restrained.

Again, since material well-being is an essential basis for progress, a National Government is working on the right lines in trying to settle the land question on the principles of consolidated holdings with scientifically expanded production and labour-saving appliances. It should continue to encourage the spread of co-operative movements in industry extending beyond the range of tribe or family. But the old "vertical" structure of the guilds should be retained, and tendencies towards a "horizontal" division on Western class lines of employers and employed discouraged. And in the industrial structure it will be necessary to deal severely with the old kindly but pernicious system of "making jobs."



It was one of the things that lowered the material standard of life, and the raising of it through increased efficiency, shorter hours with higher wages, greater opportunities for a rational cultured leisure, will provide the best check upon an undue increase of the population.

In all questions of social, cultural and political reform the language difficulty is a great stumbling-block.

Be it understood that it is primarily a question of literacy, not of speech, for the speech barrier only seriously affects the population of the Kwangs, and Fukien. But in these days a people cannot acquire real culture, or exercise political responsibility adequately, if they are not literate. And the written sign language is an insurmountable barrier in the way of any general literacy.

What is to be done?

We do not desire to see the old literary language and sign-writing put aside. It must be retained, as Greek and Latin with us, for higher education, and be, as now, made familiar in small ways to the masses through inscriptions and texts in public and ancestral halls, schools, universities and so forth. But the need is generally recognized, in China itself, for an easily acquired, popular script, side by side with it. It must be said that in spite of many ingenious attempts no satisfactory or acceptable phonetic script has so far been devised. One is driven to the Utopian suggestion that English should be taught as a second language for the political and informative literature of the day, much as it has become in Ireland, Wales, and even India where, as indeed in China, it is already the *lingua franca* of the educated.

Something may of course be done after the old fashion of the village gathering, modernised in the lecture and broadcast, but the spoken word, dissipated too fast upon the empty air, is no solid basis for the knowledge now required for responsible citizenship.

Here then are some things—a new patriotism; a wider range for the exercise of responsibility; a firmer material basis for life, giving renewed scope for cultural development on national lines, with that broader vision of a contribution to world-advance in the background—which might, all or singly, be expected to provide the new stimulus to vivify the old teachings.



Yet we do not think they are enough. We only see in them—by themselves—the painful prospects of the old cycles of decay.

The patriotism will turn to militarism ; the wider responsibilities will but provide fresh occasion for corruption and nepotism ; and improved material well-being will become a means, not for a higher spiritual culture, but a demoralising luxury and vice.

What else is needed then to warm the cold virtues of Confucianism into active life, and give the long-sought key to the quiet searchers for the Great Secret ?

The philosophy of the Tao has clearly proved inadequate in China's own experience. That Secret lies not indeed in the long-sought Harmony. There is none, and never has been, and the search for it leads but to a vain quietism. The way to higher things is rather by struggle against continually opposing forces.

We do not think that Buddhism can provide the key, however reformed or expanded, though it means to play its part and must be reckoned with. But it has not won the real love and respect of any substantial part of the Chinese people, and, with all its grandeur, has failed to provide the stimulus to fruitful action.

Could Christianity provide it ? A broad, tolerant Christianity, of course, perfectly compatible with all that is best in Chinese civilization, approving even a ritual reverence for ancestors, and finding nothing incongruous in the spectacle of " Christian General " Feng pondering the eternal questions, or even more mundane ones, in a Taoist Temple upon the Sacred Mountain ?

Christianity, properly interpreted, can give answers to both eternal and mundane questions, and by its living faith in a Personal God, manifested to Mankind in the Sacrifice of the Son, and immanent through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, provide a dynamic to give high purpose and reality to all the rules of conduct of human teachers and philosophers. Doing this for China it could save her, as it could save all the World, if the World would have it so.

Let China consider it.





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